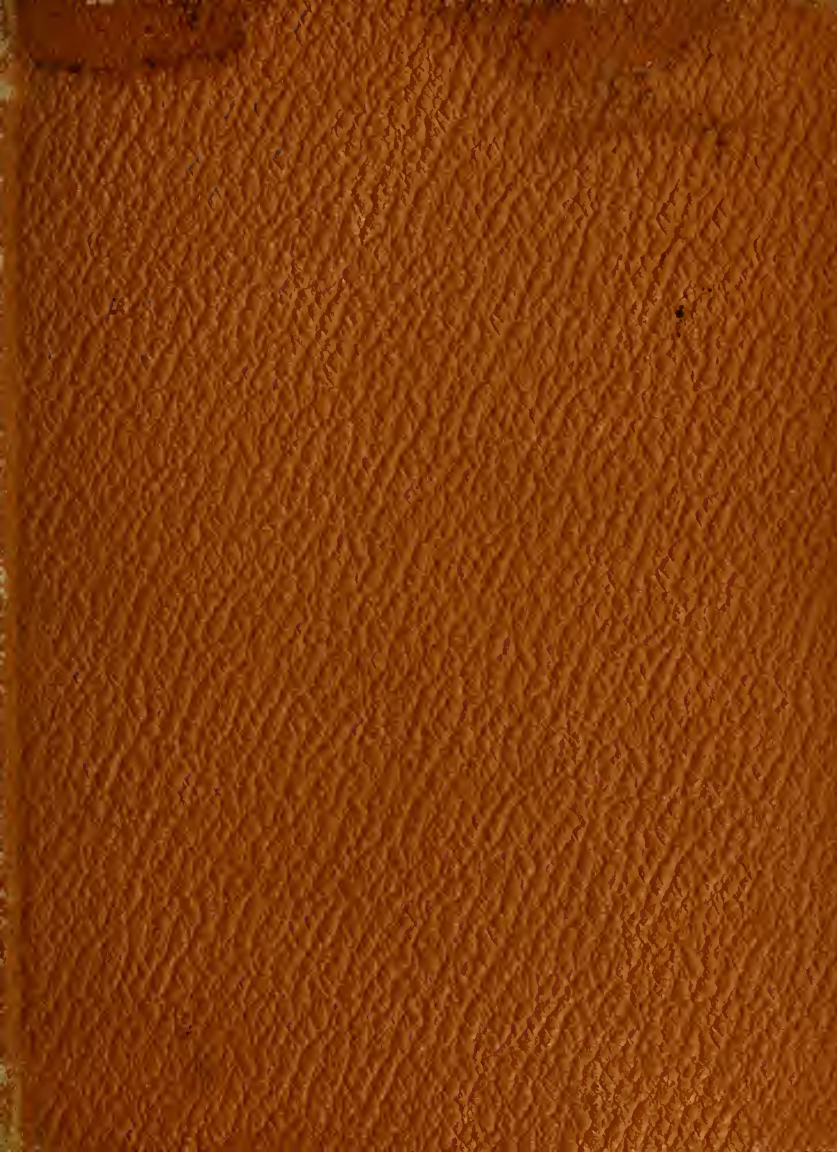








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THE CHRISTIAN. BY HALL CAINE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



THE CHRISTIAN

A STORY

BY

HALL CAINE,

AUTHOR OF "THE BONDMAN," "THE MANXMAN," ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE CHRISTIAN.

THIRD BOOK.—THE DEVIL'S ACRE.

I.

BEHIND Buckingham Palace there is a little square of modest houses, standing back from the tide of traffic, and nearly always as quiet as a cloister. At one angle of the square is a house somewhat larger than the rest, but just as simple and unassuming. In the dining-room of this house an elderly lady was sitting down to lunch alone, with the covers laid for another at the opposite end of the table.

“Hae ye the spare room ready, Emma?”

“Yes, ma’am,” said the maid.

“And the sheets done airing? And baith the pillows? And the pillow-slips—and everything finished?”

The maid was answering “Yes” to each of these questions when a hansom-cab came rattling up to the front of the house, and the old lady leapt out of her seat.

“It’s himsel’,” she cried, and she ran like a girl to the hall.

The door had been opened before she got there, and a deep voice was saying, “Is Mrs. Callender——”

"It's John! My gracious! It's John Storm!" the old woman cried, and she lifted both hands as if to fling herself into his arms.

"My guidness, laddie, but you gave puir auld Jane sic a start! Expected ye? To be sure we expected ye, and terribly thrang we've been all morning making ready. Only my daft auld brain must have been a wee ajee. But," smiling through her tears, "has a body never a cheek that you must be kissing at her hand? And is this your dog?" looking down at the bloodhound. "Welcome? Why, of course, it's welcome. What was I saying the day, Emma? 'I'd like fine to have a dog,' didn't I? and here it is to our hand. Awa' wi' ye, James, man, and show Mr. Storm to his room, and then find a bed for the creature somewhere. Letters for ye, laddie? Letters eneugh, and you'll find them on the table upstairs. Only, mind ye, the lunch is ready, and your fish is getting cold."

John Storm opened his letters in his room. One of them was from his uncle, the Prime Minister: "I rejoice to hear of your most sensible resolution. Come and dine with me at Downing Street this day week at seven o'clock. I have much to say and much to ask, and I expect to be quite alone."

Another was from his father: "I am not surprised at your intelligence; but if anything could exceed the folly of going into a monastery it is the imbecility of coming out of it. The former appears to be a subject of common talk in this island already, and no doubt the latter will soon be so."

John flinched as at a cut across the face, and then smiled a smile of relief. Apparently Glory was writing home, wherever she was, and there was good news in that, at all events. He went downstairs.

"Come your ways in, laddie, and let me look at ye again. Man, but your face is pale, and your bonnie eyes are that sunken. But sit ye down and eat. They've been starving ye, I'm thinking, and miscalling it religion. It's enough to drive a reasonable body to drink. Carnal I am, laddie, and I just want to put some flesh on your bones. Monks indeed! And in this age of the world too! Little Jack Horners sitting in corners saying, 'Oh, what a good boy am I!'"

John defended his late brethren. They were holy men; they lived a holy life; he had not been good enough for their company.

"But I feel like a sailor home from sea," he said; "tell me what has happened."

"Births, marriages, and deaths? I suppose ye're like the lave of the men and think nothing else matters to a woman. But come now, more chicken? No? A wee bitty! Aye, but ye're sair altered, laddie. Weel, where can a body begin?"

"The Canon—how is he?"

"Fine as fi'pence. Guid as ever in the pulpit? Aye, but it's a pity he doesna bide there, for he's naething to be windy of when he comes out of it. Deacon now, bless ye, or archdeacon, or some sic botherment, and his daughter is to be married to yon slip of a curate with the rabbit mouth and the heather legs. Weel, she wasna for all markets, ye ken."

"And Mrs. Macrae?"

"Gone over to the angels. Dead? Nae, ye're too expecting altogether. She's got religion though, and holds missionary meetings in her drawing-room of a Monday, and gives lunches to actor folk of a Sunday, and now a

poor woman that's been working for charity and Christianity all her days has no chance with her anyway."

"And Miss Macrae?"

"Poor young leddy, they're for marrying her at last! Aye, to that Ure man, that lord thing, with the eyeglass. I much misdoubt but her heart's been somewhere else, and there's ane auld woman would a hantle rather have heard tell of her getting the richt man than seeing the laddie bury himsel' in a monastery. She's gi'en in at last though, and it's to be a grand wedding, they're telling me. Some of your Americans are kittle cattle—just the Jews of the West seemingly—and they must do everything splendiferously. There are to be jewels as big as walnuts, and bouquets five feet in diameter, and a rope of pearls for a necklace, and a rehearsal of the hale thing in the church. Aye, indeed, a rehearsal; and the 'deacon, honest man, in the middle of the magnificence."

John Storm's pale face was twitching. "And the hospital," he said; "has anything happened there?"

"Nothing."

"No other case such as the one——"

"Not since yon poor bit lassie."

"Thank God!"

"It was the first ill thing I had heard tell of for years, and the nurses are good women for all that. High-spirited? Aye, but dear, bright, happy things, to think what they have to know and to be present at! Lawyers, doctors, and nurses see the worst of human nature, and she'd be a heartless woman who'd no make allowance for them, poor creatures!"

John Storm had risen from the table with a flushed face, making many excuses. He would step round to the

hospital; he had questions to ask there, and it would be a walk after luncheon.

"Do," said Mrs. Callender; "but remember dinner at six. And, hark ye, hinny, this house is to be your hame until you light on a better one, so just sleep saft in it and wake merrily. And Jane Callender is to be your auld auntie until some ither body tak's ye frae her, and then it'll no be her hand ye'll be kissing for fear of her wrinkles, I'm thinking."

The day was bright, the sun was shining, and the streets were full of well-groomed horses in gorgeous carriages, with coachmen in splendid liveries, going to the Drawing-room in honour of the royal birthday. As John went by the palace the approaches to it were thronged. The band of the Household Cavalry was playing within the rails, and officers in full-dress uniform, members of the diplomatic service with swords and cocked hats, and ladies in gorgeous brocades, carrying bouquets of orchids, and wearing tiaras of diamonds and large white plumes, were filing through the gates towards the Throne-room.

The hospital looked strangely unfamiliar after so short an absence, and there were new faces among the nurses who passed to and fro in the corridors. John asked for the matron, and was received with constrained and distant courtesy. Was he well? Quite well? They had a resident chaplain now, and being in priest's orders, he had many opportunities where death was so frequent. Was he sure he had not been ill? John understood—it was almost as if he had come out of some supernatural existence, and people looked at him as if they were afraid.

"I came to ask if you could tell me anything of Nurse Quayle?"

The matron could tell him nothing. The girl had

gone; they had been compelled to part with her. Nothing serious? No; but totally unfit to be a nurse. She had some good qualities certainly—cheerfulness, brightness, tenderness—and for sake of these, and his own interest in the girl, they had put up with inconceivable rudeness and irregularities. What had become of her? She really could not say. Nurse Allworthy might know—and the matron took up her pen.

John found the ward sister with the house-surgeon at the bed of a patient. She was short, even curt, said over her shoulder she knew nothing about the girl, and then turned back to her work. As John passed out of the ward the doctor followed him, and hinted that perhaps the porter might be able to tell him something.

The porter was difficult at first, but seeing his way clearer after awhile, he admitted to receiving letters for the nurse, and delivering them to her when she called. That was long ago, and she had not been there since New Year's Eve. Then she had given him a shilling, and said she would trouble him no more.

John gave him five shillings, and asked if anybody ever called for her. Yes, once. Who was it? A gentleman. Had he left his name? No, but he had said he would write. When was that? A day or two before she was there the last time.

Drake! There could not be a doubt of it. John Storm looked at the clock. It was 3.45. Then he buttoned his coat and crossed the street to the Park, with his face in the direction of St. James's Street.

Horatio Drake had given a luncheon in his rooms that day in honour of Glory's first public appearance. The performance was to come off at night, but in the course of the morning there had been a dress rehearsal in the

salon of the music-hall. Twenty men and women, chiefly journalists and artists, had assembled there to get a first glimpse of the *débutante*, and cameras had lurked behind *portières* and in alcoves to catch her poses, her expressions, her fleeting smiles and humorous grimaces. Then the company had adjourned to Drake's chambers. The luncheon was now over, the last guest had gone, and the host was in his dining-room alone.

Drake was standing by the chimney-piece, holding at arm's length a pencil sketch of a woman's beautiful face and lithe figure. "Like herself, alive to the finger-tips," he thought, and then he propped it against the pier-glass.

There was a sound of the opening and closing of the outer door downstairs, and Lord Robert entered the room. He looked heated, harassed, and exhausted. Shaking out his perfumed pocket-handkerchief, he mopped his forehead, drew a long breath, and dropped into a chair.

"I've done it," he said; "it's all over."

Polly Love had lunched with the company that day, and Lord Robert had returned home with her in order to break the news of his approaching marriage. While the girl had been removing her hat and jacket he had sat at the piano and thumbed it, hardly knowing how to begin. All at once he had said, "Do you know, my dear, I'm to be married on Saturday?" She had said nothing at first, and he had played the piano furiously. Heavens! what a frame of mind to be in! Why didn't the girl speak? At last he had looked round at her, and there she stood grinning, gasping, and white as a ghost. Suddenly she had begun to cry. Good God! such crying! Yes, it was all over. Everything had been settled somehow.

"But I'll be in harder condition before I tackle such a job again."

There was silence for a moment. Drake was leaning on the mantelpiece, his legs crossed, and one foot beating on the hearthrug. The men were ashamed, and they began to talk of indifferent things. Smoke? Don't mind. Those Indian cigars were good. Not bad, certainly.

At length Drake said in a different voice, "Cruel but necessary, Robert—necessary to the woman who is going to be your wife, cruel to the poor girl who has been."

Lord Robert rose to his feet impatiently, stretched his arm and shot out his striped cuff, and walked to and fro across the room.

"Pon my soul, I believe I should have stuck to the little thing but for the old girl, don't you know. She's made such good social running lately . . . And then she's started this evangelical craze, too . . . No, Polly wouldn't have suited her book anyhow."

Silence again, and then further talk on indifferent things.

"Wish Benson wouldn't sweep the soda-water off the table."

"Ring for it."

"The little thing really cares for me, don't you know. And it isn't my fault, is it? I had to hedge. Frank, dear boy, you're always taunting me with the treadmill we have to turn for the sake of society and so forth, but with debts about a man's neck like a millstone, what could one do?"

"I don't mean that you're worse than others, old fellow, or that sacrificing this one poor child is going to mend matters much."

"No, it isn't likely to improve my style of going, is it?"

"But that man John Storm was not so far wrong after all, and for this polygamy of our 'lavender glove tribe'

the nation itself will be overtaken by the judgment of God one of these days."

Lord Robert broke into a peal of derisive laughter. "Go on," he cried. "Go on, dear boy! It's funny to hear you, though—after to-day's proceedings, too," and he glanced significantly around the table.

Drake brought down his fist with a thump on to the mantel-piece. "Hold your tongue, Robert. How often am I to tell you this is a different thing entirely? Because I discover a creature of genius, and try to help her to the position she deserves——"

"You hypocrite! if it had been a man instead of a charming little woman with big eyes, don't you know——"

But there had been a ring at the outer door, and Benson came in to say that a clergyman was waiting downstairs.

"Little Golightly again!" said Lord Robert wearily. "Are these everlasting arrangements never——"

The man stopped him. It was not Mr. Golightly; it was a stranger; would not give his name; looked like a Catholic priest; had been there before, he thought.

"Can it be—talk of the devil——"

"Ask him up," said Drake. And while Drake bit his lip and clenched his hands, and Lord Robert took up a scent-bottle and sprayed himself with eau de Cologne, they saw a man clad in the long coat of a priest come into the room—calm, grave, self-possessed, very pale, with hollow and shaven cheeks, and dark and sunken eyes which burned with a sombre fire, and head so closely cropped as to seem to be almost bald.

John Storm's anger had cooled. As he crossed the Park the heat of his soul had turned to fear, and while he stood in the hall below, with an atmosphere of perfume

about him, and even a delicate sense of a feminine presence, his fear had turned to terror. On that account he had refused to send up his name, and on going up the staircase lined with prints, he had been tempted to turn about and fly lest he should come upon Glory face to face. But finding only the two men in the room above, his courage came back, and he hated himself for his treacherous thought of her.

"You will forgive me for this unceremonious visit, sir," he said, addressing himself to Drake.

Drake motioned him to be seated. He bowed but continued to stand.

"Your friend will remember that I have been here before."

Lord Robert bent his head and went on trifling with the spray.

"It was a painful errand, relating to a girl who had been nurse at the hospital. The girl was nothing to me, but she had a companion who was very much."

Drake nodded and his lips stiffened, but he did not speak.

"You are aware that since then I have been away from the hospital. I wrote to you on the subject; you will remember that."

"Well?" said Drake.

"I have only just returned, and have come direct from the hospital now."

"Well?"

"I see you know what I mean, sir. My young friend has gone. Can you tell me where to find her?"

"Sorry I cannot," said Drake coldly, and it stung him to see a look of boundless relief cross the grave face in front of him.

"Then you don't know——"

"I didn't say that," said Drake, and then the lines of pain came back.

"At the request of her people I brought her up to London, sir. Naturally they will look to me for news of her, and I feel responsible for her welfare."

"If that is so, you must pardon me for saying you've taken your duty lightly," said Drake.

John Storm gripped the rail of the chair in front of him and there was silence for a moment.

"Whatever I may have to blame myself with in the past, it would relieve me to find her well and happy and safe from all harm."

"She *is* well and happy and safe too—I can tell you that much."

There was another moment of silence, and then John Storm said in broken sentences and in a voice that was struggling to control itself, "I have known her since she was a child, sir . . . You cannot think how many tender memories . . . It is nearly a year since I saw her, and one likes to see old friends after an absence."

Drake did not speak, but he dropped his head, for John's eyes had begun to fill.

"We were good friends too. Boy and girl comrades almost. Brother and sister, I should say, for that was how I liked to think of myself—her elder brother, bound to take care of her."

There was a little trill of derisive laughter from the other side of the room, where Lord Robert had put the spray down noisily, and turned to look out into the street. Then John Storm drew himself up and said in a firm voice—

"Gentlemen, why should I mince matters? I will not

do so. The girl we speak of is more to me than anybody else in the world besides. Perhaps she was one of the reasons why I went into that monastery. Certainly she is the reason I have come out of it. I have come to find her. I *shall* find her. If she is in difficulty or danger I intend to save her. Will you tell me where she is?"

"Mr. Storm," said Drake, "I am sorry, very sorry, but what you say compels me to speak plainly. The lady is well and safe and happy. If her friends are anxious about her, she can reassure them for herself, and no doubt has already done so. But in the position she occupies at present, you are a dangerous man. It might not be her wish, and it would not be to her advantage, to meet with you, and I cannot allow her to run the risk."

"Has it come to that? Have you a right to speak for her, sir?"

"Perhaps I have——" Drake hesitated, and then said with a rush, "the right to protect her against a fanatic."

John Storm curbed himself; he had been through a long schooling. "Man, be honest," he said. "Either your interest is good or bad, selfish or unselfish. Which is it?"

Drake made no answer.

"But it would be useless to bandy words. I didn't come here to do that. Will you tell me where she is?"

"No."

"Then it is to be a duel between us—is that so? You for the girl's body and I for her soul? Very well, I take your challenge."

There was silence once more, and John Storm's eyes wandered about the room. They fixed themselves at length on the sketch by the pier-glass.

"On my former visit I met with the same reception.

The girl could take care of herself. It was no business of mine. How that relation has ended I do not ask. But this one——”

“This one is an entirely different matter,” said Drake, “and I will thank you not to——”

But John Storm was making the sign of the cross on his breast, and saying, as one who was uttering a prayer, “God grant it is and always may be!”

At the next moment he was gone from the room. The two men stood where he had left them until his footsteps had ceased on the stairs and the door had closed behind him. Then Drake cried, “Benson—a telegraph form! I must telegraph to Koenig at once.”

“Yes, he’ll follow her up on the double-quick,” said Lord Robert. “But what matter? His face will be enough to frighten the girl. Ugh! It was the face of a death’s-head.”

At dinner that night John Storm was more than usually silent. To break in upon his gravity, Mrs. Calender asked him what he intended to do next.

“To take priest’s orders without delay,” he said.

“And what then?”

“Then,” he said, lifting a twitching and suffering face, “to make an attack on the one mighty stronghold of the devil’s kingdom, whereof woman is the direct and immediate victim; to tell Society over again it is an organised hypocrisy for the pursuit and demoralisation of woman, and the Church that bachelorhood is not celibacy, and polygamy is against the laws of God; to look and search for the beaten and broken who lie scattered and astray in our bewildered cities, and to protect them and shelter them whatever they are, however low they have fallen, because they are my sisters and I love them.”

"God bless ye, laddie! That's spoken like a man," said the old woman, rising from her seat.

But John Storm's pale face had already flushed up to the eyes, and he dropped his head as one who was ashamed.

II.

AT eight o'clock that night John Storm was walking through the streets of Soho. The bell of a jam-factory had just been rung, and a stream of young girls in big hats with gorgeous flowers and sweeping feathers were pouring out of an archway and going arm-in-arm down the pavement. Men standing in groups at street ends shouted to them as they passed, and they shouted back in shrill voices and laughed with wild joy. In an alley round one corner an organ-man was playing "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay," and some of the girls began to dance and sing around him. Coming to the main artery of traffic, they were almost run down by a splendid equipage which was cutting across two thoroughfares into a square, and they screamed with mock terror as the fat coachman in tippet and cockade bellowed to them to get out of the way.

The square was a centre of gaiety. Theatres and music-halls lined two of its sides, and the gas on their façades and the beacons on their roofs were beginning to burn brightly in the fading daylight. With skips and leaps the girls passed over to the doors of these palaces, and peered with greedy eyes through lines of policemen and doorkeepers in livery at gentlemen in shields of shirt-front and ladies in light cloaks and long white gloves, stepping in satin slippers and patent leather shoes out of gorgeous carriages into gorgeous halls.

John Storm was looking on at this masquerade when

suddenly he became aware that the flare of coarse lights on the front of the building before him formed the letters of a word. The word was "GLORIA." Seeing it again as he had seen it in the morning, but now identified and explained, he grew hot and cold by turns, and his brain, which refused to think, felt like a sail that is flapping idly on the edge of the wind.

There was a garden in the middle of the square, and he walked round and round it. He gazed vacantly at a statue in the middle of the garden and then walked round the rails again. The darkness was gathering fast, the gas was beginning to blaze, and he was like a creature in the coil of a horrible fascination. That word, that name over the music-hall, fizzing and crackling in its hundred lights, seemed to hold him as by an eye of fire. And remembering what had happened since he left the monastery—the sandwich-men, the boards on the omnibuses, the hoardings on the walls—it seemed like a fiery finger which had led him to that spot. Only one thing was clear—that a supernatural power had brought him there, and that it was intended he should come. Fearfully, shamefully, miserably, rebuking himself for his doubts, yet conquered and compelled by them, he crossed the street and entered the music-hall.

He was in the pit, and it was crowded, not a seat vacant anywhere, and many persons standing packed in the crush-room at the back. His first sensation was of being stared at. First the man at the pay-box and then the check-taker had looked at him, and now he was being looked at by the people about him. They were both men and girls. Some of the men wore light frock-coats and talked in the slang of the racecourse; some of the girls wore noticeable hats and showy flowers in their bosoms,

and were laughing in loud voices. They made a way for him of themselves, and he passed through to a wooden barrier that ran round the last of the pit seats.

The music-hall was large, and to John Storm's eyes, straight from the poverty of his cell, it seemed garish in the red and gold of its Eastern decorations. Men in the pit seats were smoking pipes and cigarettes, and waiters with trays were hurrying up and down the aisles serving ale and porter, which they set down on ledges like the book-rests in church. In the stalls in front, which were not so full, gentlemen in evening dress were smoking cigars, and there was an arc of the tier above in which people in fashionable costumes were talking audibly. Higher yet, and unseen from that position, was a larger audience still, whose voices rumbled like a distant sea. A cloud of smoke filled the atmosphere, and from time to time there was the sound of popping corks and breaking glasses and rolling bottles.

The curtain was down, but the orchestra was beginning to play. Two men in livery came from the sides of the curtain and fixed up large figures in picture-frames that were attached to the wings of the proscenium. Then the curtain rose and the entertainment was resumed. It was in sections, and after each performance the curtain was dropped and the waiters went round with their trays again.

John Storm had seen it all before in the days when, under his father's guidance, he had seen everything—the juggler, the acrobat, the step-dancer, the comic singer, the tableaux and the living picture. He felt tired and ashamed, yet he could not bring himself to go away. As the evening advanced he thought, "How foolish! What madness it was to think of such a thing!" He was easier after that,

and began to listen to the talk of the people about him. It was free, but not offensive. In the frequent intervals some of the men played with the girls, pushing and nudging and joking with them, and the girls laughed and answered back. Occasionally one of them would turn her head aside and look into John's face with a saucy smile. "God forbid that I should grudge them their pleasure," he thought. "It's all they have, poor creatures."

But the audience grew noisier as the evening went on. They called to the singers, made inarticulate squeals, and then laughed at their own humour. A lady sang a comic song. It described her attempt to climb to the top of an omnibus on a windy day. John turned to look at the faces behind him, and every face was red and hot, and grinning and grimacing. He was still half-buried in the monastery he had left that morning, and he thought, "Such are the nightly pleasures of our people. To-night, to-morrow night, the night after! Oh, my country, my country!"

He was awakened from these thoughts by an outburst of applause. The curtain was down and nothing was going on except the putting up of a new figure in the frames. The figure was 8. Someone behind him said, "That's her number!" "The new *artiste*?" said another voice. "Gloria," said the first.

John Storm's head began to swim. He looked back—he was in a solid block of people. "After all, what reasons have I?" he thought, and he determined to stand his ground.

More applause. Another leader of the orchestra had appeared. Baton in hand, he was bowing from his place before the foot-lights. It was Koenig, the organist, and John Storm shuddered in the darkest corner of his soul.

The stalls had filled up unawares to him, and a party was now coming into a private box which had hitherto been empty. The late-comers were Drake and Lord Robert Ure, and a lady with short hair brushed back from her forehead.

John Storm felt the place going round him, yet he steadied and braced himself. "But this is the natural atmosphere of such people," he thought. He tried to find satisfaction in the thought that Glory was not with them. Perhaps they had exaggerated their intimacy with her.

The band began to play. It was music for the entrance of a new performer. The audience became quiet, there was a keen, eager, expectant air, and then the curtain went up. John Storm felt dizzy. If he could have escaped he would have turned and fled. He gripped with both hands the rail in front of him.

Then a woman came gliding on to the stage. She was a tall girl in a dark dress and long black gloves, with red hair and a head like a rose. It was Glory! A cloud came over John Storm's eyes and for a few moments he saw no more.

There was some applause from the pit and the regions overhead. The people in the stalls were waving their handkerchiefs, and the lady in the box was kissing her hand. Glory was smiling, quite at her ease, apparently not at all nervous, only a little shy and with her hands interlaced in front of her. Then there was silence again and she began to sing.

It is the moment when prayers go up from the heart not used to pray. Strange contradiction! John Storm found himself praying that Glory might do well, that she might succeed and eclipse everything! But he had turned

his eyes away, and the sound of her voice was even more afflicting than the sight of her face. It was nearly a year since he had heard it last, and now he was hearing it under these conditions, in a place like this! He must have been making noises by his breathing. "Hush! hush!" said the people about him, and somebody tapped him on the shoulder.

After a moment he regained control of himself, and he lifted his head and listened. Glory's voice, which had been quavering at first, gathered strength. She was singing "Mylecharaine," and the wild, plaintive harmony of the old Manx ballad was floating in the air like the sound of the sea. After her first lines a murmur of approval went round, the people sat up and leaned forward, and then there was silence again, dead silence, and then loud applause.

But it was only with the second verse that the humour of her song began, and John Storm waited for it with a trembling heart. He had heard her sing it a hundred times in the old days, and she was singing it now as she had sung it before. There were the same tricks of voice, the same tricks of gesture, the same expressions, the same grimaces. Everything was the same and yet everything was changed. He knew it. He was sure it must be so. So artless and innocent then, now so subtle and significant. Where was the difference? The difference was in the place, in the people. John Storm could have found it in his heart to turn on the audience and insult them. Foul-minded creatures, laughing, screaming, squealing, punctuating their own base interpretations, and making evil of what was harmless. How he hated the grinning faces round about him!

When the song was finished Glory swept a gay curtsy,

lifted her skirts and tripped off the stage. Then there were shouting, whistling, stamping, and deafening applause. The whole house was unanimous for an encore, and she came back smiling and bowing with a certain look of elation and pride. John Storm was becoming terrified by his own anger. "Be quiet there," said someone behind him. "Who's the jossor?" said somebody else, and then he heard Glory's voice again.

It was another Manx ditty. A crew of young fishermen are going ashore on Saturday night after their week on the sea after the herring. They go up to the inn; their sweethearts meet them there; they drink and sing. At length they are so overcome by liquor and love that they have to be put to bed in their big sea-boots. Then the girls kiss them and leave them. The singer imitated the kissing, and the delighted audience repeated the sound. Sounds of kissing came from all parts of the hall, mingled with loud acclamations of laughter. The singer smiled and kissed back. Somehow she conveyed the sense of a confidential feeling, as if she were doing it for each separate person in the audience, and each person had an impulse to respond. It was irresistible, it was maddening, it swept over the whole house.

John Storm felt sick in his very soul. Glory knew well what she was doing. She knew what these people wanted. His Glory! Glory of the old, innocent, happy days! O God! O God! If he could only get out! But that was impossible. Behind him the dense mass was denser than ever, and he was tightly wedged in by a wall of faces—hot, eager, with open mouths, teeth showing, and glittering and dancing eyes. He tried not to listen to what the people about were saying, yet he could not help but hear.

"Tasty, ain't she?" "Cerulean, eh?" "Bit 'ot, certainly!" "Well, if I was a Johnny, and had got the oof, she'd have a brougham and a sealskin to-morrow." "To-night, you mean," and then there were significant squeaks and trills of laughter.

They called her back again, and yet again, and she returned with unaffected cheerfulness and a certain look of triumph. At one moment she was doing the gaiety of youth, and at the next the crabbedness of age, now the undeveloped femininity of the young girl, then the volubility of the old woman. But John Storm was trying to hear none of it. With his head on his breast and his eyes down he was struggling to think of the monastery and to imagine that he was still buried in his cell. It was only this morning that he left it, yet it seemed to be a hundred years ago. Last night the Brotherhood, the singing of Evensong, Compline, the pure air, silence, solitude, and the atmosphere of prayer; and to-night the crowds, the clouds of smoke, the odour of drink, the meaning laughter, and Glory as the centre of it all!

For a moment everything was blotted out, and then there was loud hand-clapping and cries of "Bravo!" He lifted his head. Glory had finished and was bowing herself off. The lady in the private box flung her a bouquet of damask roses. She picked it up and kissed it, and bowed to the box, and then the acclamations of applause were renewed.

The crush behind relaxed a little, and he began to elbow his way out. People were rising or stirring everywhere, and the house was emptying fast. As the audience surged down the corridors to the doors they talked and laughed and made inarticulate sounds. "A tricky bit of muslin, eh?" "Yus; she's thick." "She's my dart, any-

how." Then the whistling of a tune. It was the chorus of "Mylecharaine." John Storm felt the cool air of the street on his hot face at last. The policemen were keeping a way for the people coming from the stalls, the door-keepers were whistling or shouting for cabs, and their cries were being caught up by the match-boys, who were running in and out like dogs among the carriage wheels and the horses' feet. "En-sim!" "Four-wheel-er!"

In a narrow court at the back, dimly lit and not much frequented, there was a small open door under a lamp suspended from the high blank wall. This was the stage-door of the music-hall, and a group of young men, looking like hairdressers' assistants, blocked the pavement at either side of it. "Wonder what she's like off." "Like a laidy, you bet." "Yus; but none o' yer bloomin' hamatoors." "Gawd, here's the josser again!"

John Storm pushed his way through to where a commissioner sat behind a glass partition in a little room walled with pigeon-holes.

"Can I see Miss Quayle?" he asked.

The porter looked blank.

"Gloria, then," said John Storm with an effort.

The porter looked at him suspiciously. Had he an appointment? No; but could he send in his name? The porter looked doubtful. Would she come out soon? The porter did not know. Would she come this way? The porter could not tell. Could he have her address?

"If ye want to write to the laidy, write here," said the porter, with a motion of his hand to the pigeon-holes.

John Storm felt humiliated and ashamed. The hairdressers' assistants were grinning at him. He went out feeling that Glory was farther than ever from him now, and if he met her they might not speak. But he could

not drag himself away. In the darkness under a lamp at the other side of the street he stood and waited. Shoddy broughams drove up, with drivers in shabby livery, bringing "turns" in wonderful hats and overcoats, over impossible wigs, whiskers, and noses—niggers, acrobats, clowns, and comic singers, who stepped out, shook the straw of their carriage carpets off their legs, and passed in at the stage entrance.

At length the commissionaire appeared at the door and whistled, and a hansom-cab rattled up to the end of the court. Then a lady muffled in a cape, with the hood drawn over her head, and carrying a bouquet of roses, came out leaning on the arm of a gentleman. She stood a moment by his side and spoke to him and laughed. John heard her laughter. At the next moment she had stepped into the hansom, the door had fallen to, the driver had turned, the gentleman had raised his hat, the light had fallen on the lady's face, and she was leaning forward and smiling. John saw her smiles.

At the next moment the hansom had passed into the illuminated thoroughfares and the group of people had dispersed. John Storm was alone under the lamp in the little dark street, and somewhere in the dark alleys behind him the organ-man was still grinding out "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay."

"Weel, what luck on your first night out?" said Mrs. Callender at breakfast in the morning. "Found any of the poor lost things yet?"

"One," said John, with a rueful face, "Lost enough, though she doesn't know it yet, God help her!"

"They never do at first, laddie. Write to her friends if she has any."

"Her friends?"

"Nothing like home influences, ye ken."
"I will—I must! It's all I can do now."

III.

THE PRIORY, *Friday morning.*

OH, my dear aunties, don't be terrified, but Glory has had a kind of a wee big triumph! Nothing very awful, you know, but on Monday night, before a rather larger company than usual, she sang and recited and play-acted a little, and as a result all the earth—the London earth—is talking about her, and nobody is taking any notice of the rest of the world. Every post is bringing me flowers with ribbons and cards attached, or illustrated weeklies with my picture and my life in little, and I find it's wonderful what a lot of things you may learn about yourself if you'll only read the papers. My room at this moment is like a florist's window at nine o'clock on Saturday morning, and I have reason to suspect that mine host and teacher, Carl Koenig, F.R.C.O., exhibits them to admiring neighbours when I am out. The voice of that dear old turtle has ever since Monday been heard in the land, and besides telling me about Roland day and night from all the subterranean passages of the house, he has taken to waiting on me like a nigger and ordering soups and jellies for me as if I had suddenly become an invalid. Of course I am an able-bodied woman just the same as ever, but my nerves have been on the rack all the week, and I feel exactly as I did long ago at Peel when I was a little naughty minx and got up into the tower of the old church and began pulling at the bell rope, you remember. Oh dear! Oh dear! My frantic terror at the noise of the big bells and the vibration of the shaky old walls! Once I had begun I couldn't leave off for my life, but went on

tugging and tugging and quaking and quaking until—have you forgotten it?—all the people came running helter-skelter under the impression that the town was afire. And then, behold, it was only little me, trembling like a leaf and crying like a ninny! I remember I was scolded and smacked and dismissed into outer darkness (it was the chip vault, I think), for that first outbreak of fame, and now, lest you should want to mete out the same punishment to me again . . .

Aunt Anna, I'm knitting the sweetest little shawl for you, dear—blue and white to suit your complexion—being engaged in the evening only, and most of the day sole mistress of my own will and pleasure. How charming of me, isn't it? But I'm afraid it isn't, because you'll see through me like a colander, for I want to tell you something which I have kept back too long, and when I think of it I grow old and wrinkled like a Christmas apple. So you must be a pair of absolute old angels, aunts, and break the news to grandfather.

You know I told you, Aunt Rachel, to say something for me at nine o'clock on the Queen's birthday. And you remember that Mr. Drake used to think pearls and diamonds of Glory and predict wonderful things for her. Then you don't forget that Mr. Drake had a friend named Lord Robert Ure, commonly called Lord Bob. Well, you see, by Mr. Drake's advice and Lord Bobbie's influence and agency, and I don't know what, I have made one more change—it's to be the last, dears, the very last—in my Wandering Jew existence, and now I am no longer a society entertainer, because I am a music-hall art——

Glory had written so far when she dropped the pen and rose from the table wiping her eyes.

"My poor child, you can't tell them, it's impossible; they would never forgive you!"

Then a carriage stopped before the house, the garden-bell was rung, and the maid came into the room with a lady's card. It was inscribed "Miss Polly Love," with many splashes and flourishes.

"Ask her up," said Glory. And then Polly came rustling up the stairs in a silver-grey silk dress and a showy hat, and with a pug-dog tucked under her arm. She looked older and less beautiful. The pink and ivory of her cheeks was coated with powder, and her light grey eyes were pencilled. There was the same blemished appearance as before, and the crack in the vase was now plainly visible. Glory had met the girl only once since they parted after the hospital, but Polly kissed her effusively. Then she sat down and began to cry.

"Perhaps you wouldn't think it, my dear, but I'm the most miserable girl in London. Haven't you heard about it? I thought everybody knew. Robert is going to be married. Yes, indeed, to-morrow morning to that American heiress, and I hadn't an idea of it until Monday afternoon. That was the day of your luncheon, dear, and I felt sure something was going to happen, because I broke my looking-glass dressing to go out. Robert took me home, and he began to play the piano, and I could see he was going to say something. 'Do you know, little woman, I'm to be married on Saturday?' I wonder I didn't drop, but I didn't, and he went on playing. But it was no use trying, and I burst out and ran into my room. After a minute I heard him coming in, but he didn't lift me up as he used to do. Only talked to me over my back, telling me to control myself, and what he was going to do for me, and so on. He used to say a few tears made

me nicer looking, but it was no good crying—and then he went away.”

She began to cry again, and the dog in her lap began to howl.

“O God! I don’t know what I’ve done to be so unfortunate. I’ve not been flash at all, and I never went to cafés at night, or to Sally’s or Kate’s, as so many girls do, and he can’t say I ever took notice of anybody else. When I love anybody I think of him last thing at night and first thing in the morning, and now to be left alone . . . I’m sure I shall never live through it!”

Glory tried to comfort the poor broken creature. It was her duty to live. There was her child—had she never even seen it since she parted with it to Mrs. Jupe? It must be such a darling by this time, creeping about and talking a little, wherever it was. She ought to have the child to live with her, it would be such company.

Polly kissed the pug to stop its whining, and said, “I don’t want company. Life isn’t the same thing to me now. He thinks because he is marrying that woman . . . What better is she than me, I would like to know? She’s only snapping at him for what he is, and he is only taking her for what she’s got, and I’ve a great mind to go to All Saints and shame them? You wouldn’t? Well, it’s hard to hide one’s feelings, but it would serve them right if—if I did it.”

Polly had risen with a wild look and was pressing the pug so hard that it was howling again.

“Did what?” said Glory.

“Nothing . . . that is to say——”

“You mustn’t dream of going to the church. The police——”

"Oh, it isn't the police I'm afraid of," said Polly, tossing her head.

"What then?"

"Never mind, my dear," said Polly.

On the way downstairs she reproached herself for not seeing what was coming. "But girls like us never do, now do we?"

Glory coloured up to her hair, but made no protest. At the gate Polly wiped her eyes and drew down her veil and said, "I'm sorry to say it to your face, my dear, but it's all been that Mr. Drake's doings, and a girl ought to know he'd do as much himself, and worse. But you're a great woman now, and in everybody's mouth, so you needn't care. Only——"

Glory's face was scarlet and her under lip was bleeding. Yet she kissed the poor shallow thing at parting, because she was down, and did not understand, and lived in another world entirely. But going back to where her letter lay unfinished, she thought, "Impossible! If this girl, living in an atmosphere so different, thinks that . . ." Then she sat at the table and forced herself to tell all.

She had got through the red riot of her confession and was writing, "I don't know what he would think of it, but do you know I thought I saw his face on Wednesday night. It was in the dark and I was in a cab driving away from the stage-door. But so changed! oh, so changed! It must have been a dream, and it was the same as if his ghost had passed me."

Then she became aware of voices in dispute downstairs. First, a man's voice, then the voices of two men, one of them Koenig's, the other with a haunting ring in it. She got up from the table and went to the door of her room, going on tiptoe, yet hardly knowing why. Koenig

was saying, "No, sair, de lady does not lif here." Then a deep, strong chest-voice answered, "Mr. Koenig, surely you remember me?" and Glory's heart seemed to beat like a watch. "No-o, sair. Are you . . . Oh, yes; vhat am I tinkin' of? . . . But de lady——"

"Mr. Koenig," Glory called, cried, gasped over the stair-rail, "ask the gentleman to come up, please."

She hardly knew what happened next, only that Koenig seemed to be muttering confused explanations below, and that she was back in her sitting-room giving a glance into the looking-glass and doing something with her hair. Then there was a step on the stairs, on the landing, at the threshold, and she fell back a few paces from the door that she might see him as he came in. He knocked. Her heart was beating so violently that she had to keep her hand over it. "Who's there?"

"It is I."

"Who's I?"

Then she saw him coming down on her, and the very sunlight seemed to wave like the shadows on a ship. He was paler and thinner, his great eyes looked weary though they smiled, his hand felt bony though firm, and his head was closely cropped.

She looked at him for a moment without speaking, and with a sensation of fulness at her heart that was almost choking her.

"Is it you? I didn't know it was you . . . I was just thinking . . ." She was talking at random and was out of breath as if she had been running.

"Glory, I have frightened you."

"Frightened? Oh, no! Why should you think so? Perhaps I am crying, but then I'm always doing that nowadays. And besides, you are so——"

"Yes, I am altered," he said in the pause that followed.

"And I?"

"You are altered too." He was looking at her with an earnest and passionate gaze. It was she—herself—Glory—not merely a vision or a dream. Again he recognised the glorious eyes with their brilliant lashes and the flashing spot in one of them that had so often set his heart beating. She looked back at him and thought, "How ill he must have been!" and then a lump came into her throat, and she began to laugh that she might not have to cry, and broke out into broad Manx lest he should hear the tremor in her voice.

"But you're coming-to, aren't ye? And you've left that ther . . . Aw, it's glad ter'ble I am, as our people say, and it's longin' mortal you'd be for all, boy."

Another trill of nervous laughter and then a burst of earnest English. "But tell me, you've come for good; you are not going back to——"

"No, I am not going back to the Brotherhood, Glory." How friendly his low voice sounded!

"And you?"

"Well, I've left the hospital, you see."

"Yes, I see," he said. His weary eyes were wandering about the room, and for the first time she felt ashamed of its luxuries and its flowers.

"But how did you find me?"

"I went to the hospital first——"

"So you hadn't forgotten me? Do you know, I thought you had quite . . . But tell me at once, where did you go then?"

He was silent for a moment, and she said, "Well?"

"Then I went to Mr. Drake's chambers."

"I don't know why everybody should think that Mr. Drake——"

His great eyes were fixed on her face and his mouth was quivering, and to prevent him from speaking, she put on a look of forced gaiety and said—

"But how did you light on me at last?"

"I meant to find you, Glory, if I tramped all London over and everybody denied you to me"—the lump in her throat was hurting her dreadfully—"but I chanced to see the name over the music-hall."

She saw it coming and broke into laughter. "The music-hall! Only think! You looking at music-halls!"

"I was there on Monday night."

"You? Monday? Then perhaps it was not my fancy that I saw you by the stage-door . . ." Her nerves were getting more and more excited, and to calm them she crossed her arms above her head. "So they gave you my address at the stage-door, did they?"

"No, I wrote for it to Peel."

"Peel?" She caught her breath and her arms came down. "Then perhaps you told them where——"

"I told them nothing, Glory."

She looked at him through her eyelashes, her head held down.

"Not that it matters, you know. I've just been writing to them, and they'll soon . . . But oh, I've so much to say, and I can't say it here. Couldn't we go somewhere? Into the Park or on to the Heath, or farther—much farther—the room is so small, and I feel as if I've been suffocating for want of air."

"I've something to say, too, and if——"

"Then let it be to-morrow morning, and we'll start

early, and you'll bring me back in time for the theatre. Say Paddington Station at eleven—will that do?"

"Yes."

She saw him to the gate, and when he was going she wanted him to kiss her hand, so she pretended to do the high handshake, but he only held it for a moment and looked steadily into her eyes. The sunshine was pouring into the garden, and she was bare-headed. Her hair was coiled up, and she was wearing a light morning blouse. He thought she had never looked so beautiful.

On getting into the omnibus at the end of the street, he took a letter out of his breast-pocket, and, being alone, he first carried it to his lips, then reopened and read it:—

"See her at once, dear John, and keep in touch with her, and I shall be happy and relieved. As for your father, that old Chalse is going crazy, and is sending Lord Storm crazy too. He has actually discovered that the dust the witch walks on who has cast the evil eye on you lies in front of Glenfaba gate, and he has been sweeping it up o' nights, and scattering it in front of Knockaloe! What simplicity! There are only two women here. Does the silly old gawk mean Rachel! or is it perhaps Aunt Anna?"

And while the omnibus joggled down the street, and the pale young clergyman with the great weary eyes was poring over his letter, Glory was sitting at her table and writing with flying fingers and a look of enthusiastic ecstasy:—

"I've had three bites at this cherry. But who do you think has just been here? John—John Storm! But then you know that he is back, and it wasn't merely my fancy that I saw him by the stage-door. It seems as if people had been denying me to him, and he has been waiting

for me and watching over me" (blot). "His voice is so low, but I suppose that comes to people who are much alone, and he is so thin and so pale, and his eyes are so large, and they have that deep look that cuts into the heart. He knew he was changed, and I think he was ashamed" (blot), "but of course I didn't let wit that I was taking notice, and I'm so happy for his sake, poor fellow, that he has escaped from his cage in that Salvation Zoo, that I know I shall make them split their sides in the theatre to-night" (blot, blot). "How tiresome! This ink must have got water in it somehow, and then my handwriting is such a hop-skip-and-a-jump anyway. But hoots!

'Why shouldn't I love Johnny?
And why shouldn't Johnny love me?'

GLORY.

IV.

It was a beautiful May morning, and standing outside Paddington Station with the dog at his feet, he felt her approach instinctively as she came towards him with her free step, in her white cambric dress under the light parasol fringed with lace. Her face was glowing with the fresh air, and she looked happy and bright. As they walked into the station she poured out a stream of questions about the dog, took possession of him straightway, and concluded to call him Don.

They agreed to spend the day at Burnham Beeches, and while he went for the tickets she stepped on to the platform. It was Saturday, the bookstall was ablaze with the picture papers, and one of them was prominently displayed at a page containing her own portrait. She wanted John to see this, so she invented an excuse for bringing

him face to face with it, and then she laughed, and he bought the paper.

The clerk recognised her—they could see that by the smile he kept in reserve,—and a group of officers in the Guards, in flannels and straw hats, going down to their club at Maidenhead, looked at her and nudged each other, as if they knew who she was. Her eyes danced, her lips smiled, and she was proud that John should see the first-fruits of her fame. She was proud of him, too, with his bold walk and strong carriage, as they passed the officers, in their negligent dress, with their red and blue neckties. But John's heart was aching, and he was wondering how he was to begin on the duty he had to do.

From the moment they started she gave herself up to the delights of their holiday, and even the groaning and cranking and joggling of the train amused her. When the Guards got into their first-class carriage, they had glanced at the open window where her brilliant yes and rosy lips were gleaming behind a veil. John gazed at her with his slow and tender looks, and felt guilty and ashamed.

They left the train at Slough, and a wave of freshness with an odour of verdure and sap blew into their faces. The dog leaped and barked, and Glory skipped along with it, breaking every moment into enthusiastic exclamations. There was hardly any wind, and the clouds, which were very high overhead, were scarcely moving. It was a glorious day, and Glory's face wore an expression of perfect happiness.

They lunched at the old hotel in the town, with the window open, and the swallows darting in the air outside, and Glory, who took milk "for remembrance," rose and said, "I looks towards Mr. Storm," and then drank his health and swept him the prettiest curtsy. All through

lunch she kept feeding the dog from her own fingers, and at the end rebuked him for spreading his bones in a half-circle across the carpet, a thing which was never done, she said, in the best society, this side the Cannibal Islands.

"By-and-by," he thought; "time enough by-and-by," for the charm of her joy was infectious.

The sun was high when they started on their walk, and her face looked flushed and warm. But through the park-like district to the wood she raced with Don, and made him leap over her sunshade and roll over and over on the bright green grass. The larks were trilling overhead, everything was humming and singing.

"Let her have one happy day," he thought, and they began to call and shout to each other.

Then they came to the beeches, and being sheltered from the fiery rays of the sun, she put down her sunshade and John took off his hat. The silence and gloom, the great gnarled trees with their thews and sinews, their arms and thighs and loins, the gentle rustle of the breeze in the branches overhead, the deep accumulation of dead leaves underfoot, the fluttering of wings, the low cooing of pigeons, and all the mystery and wonder of the wood brought a sense of awe as on entering a mighty minster in the dusk. But this wore away presently, and Glory began to sing. Her pure voice echoed in the fragrant air, and the happiness so long pent up and starved seemed to bubble in every word and note.

"Isn't this better than singing in music-halls?" he thought, and then he began to sing too, just like any happy boy, without thinking of yesterday or to-morrow, of before or after. She smiled at him. He smiled back. It was like a dream. After his long seclusion it was difficult to believe it could be true. The open air, the per-

fume of the leaves they were wading through, the silver bark of the birches and the blue peeps of the sky between, and then Glory walking with her graceful motion, and laughing and singing by his side! "I shall wake up in a minute," he thought, "I'm sure I shall!"

They sang one song together. It was "Lasses and Lads," and, to make themselves think it was the old time back again, they took each other's hands and swung them to the tune. He felt her clasp like milk coursing through his body, and a great wave of tenderness swept up his hard resolve, as sea-wrack is thrown up after a storm. "She is here; we are together; why trouble about anything more?" and the time flew by.

But their voices went wrong immediately, and they were soon in difficulties. Then she laughed, and they began again, but they could not keep together, and as often as they tried they failed. "Ah, it's not like the old days," he thought, and a mood of sadness came over him. He had begun to observe in Glory the trace of the life she had passed through—words, phrases, ideas, snatches of slang, touches of moods which had the note of a slight vulgarity. When the dog took a bone uninvited she cried, "It's a click; you've sneaked it;" when John broke down in the singing, she told him to "chuck it off the chest," and when he stopped altogether she calied him glum and said she would "do it on her own."

"Why does he look so sorrowful?" she thought, and telling herself that this came to people who were much alone, she rattled on more recklessly than before.

She talked of the life of the music-hall, the life at the "back," glorifying it by a tone of apology. It was all hurry-scurry, slapdash-and-drive, no time to consider effects, a succession of last acts and first nights; so it was

really harder to be a music-hall woman than a regular actress. And the music-hall woman was no worse than other women—considering. Had he seen their ballet? It was fetching. Such pages! Simply darlings! *They* were the proud young birds of paradise whom toffs like those Guards came to see, and it was fun to see them pluming and preening themselves at the back, each for the eyes of her own particular lord in the stalls. Thus she flung out unfamiliar notes, hardly knowing their purport, but to John they were as slimy creatures out of the social mire she had struggled through. Oh, London! London! Its shadow was over them even there, and go where they would, they could never escape from it.

His former thought began to hang about him again, and he asked her to tell him what had happened to her during his absence.

"Shall I?" she said. "Well, I brought three golden sovereigns out of the hospital to distribute among the people of London, but, bless you, they went nowhere."

"And what then?"

"Then—then Hope was a good breakfast but a bad supper, you know. But shall I tell you all? Yes, yes, yes, I will."

She told him of Mrs. Jupe's, and of the deception she had practised upon her people, and he turned his head that he might not see her tears. She told him of the "Three Graces," and of the stage-manager—she called him the "stage-damager"—and then *she* turned her head that she might hide her shame. She told him of Josephs, the bogus agent, and his face grew hard and his brown eyes looked black.

"And where did you say his place was?" he asked in a voice that vibrated and broke.

"I didn't say," she answered with a laugh and a tear.

She told him of Aggie, and of the foreign clubs, and of Koenig, and of the dinner-party at the Home Secretary's and then she skipped a step and cried—

"Ding, dong, dended,
My tale's ended."

"And was it there you met Mr. Drake again?"

She replied with a nod.

"Never having seen him in the meantime?"

She pursed her lips and shook her head. "That's all over now, and what matter? 'I likes to be jolly and I allwis is!'"

"But is it all over?" he said, and he looked at her again with the deep look that had cut into her heart.

"He's going to say something," she thought, and she began to laugh, but with a faint tremor, and giving the dog her parasol to carry in his mouth, she took off her hat, swung it in her hand by the brim and set off to run.

There was the light shimmer of a pool at a level below, where the water had drained to a bottom and was enclosed by beeches. The trees seemed to hang over it with outstretched wings, like birds about to alight, and round its banks there were plots of violets which filled the air with their fragrance. It was a God-blest bit of ground, and when he came up with her she was standing at the edge of the marshy mere panting and on the point of tears, and saying in a whisper, "Oh, how beautiful!"

"But however am I to get across?" she cried, looking with mock terror on the two inches of water that barely covered the grass, and at the pretty red shoes that peeped from under her dress.

Then something extraordinary occurred. She hardly knew what was happening until it was over. Without a

word, without a smile, he lifted her up in his arms and carried her to the other side. She felt helpless like a child—as if suddenly she belonged to herself no longer. Her head had fallen on his shoulder and her heart was beating against his breast. Or was it *his* heart that was beating? When he put her down she was afraid she was going to cry, so she began to laugh and to say they mustn't lose that 7.30 to London or the "rag" would be rolling up without her and the "stage-damager" would be using "cuss words."

They had to pass the old church of Stoke Pogis on the way back to the town, and after looking at its timber belfry and steeple, John suggested that they should see the inside. The sexton was found working in the garden at the side of his house, and he went indoors for the keys. "Here they be, sir, and you being a pa'son I'll bide in the orchet. You and your young missus can look at the church without me. 'A b'lieve 'a hev seed it afore," he said with a twinkle.

The church was dark and cool. There was a window representing an angel ascending to heaven against a deep-blue sky, and a squire's pew furnished like a box at the theatre with a carpet, and even a stove. The chairs in the front bore family crests, and behind them were inferior chairs, without crests, for the servants. John had opened the little modern organ and begun to play. After awhile he began to sing. He sang "Nazareth," and his voice filled the empty church and went up into the gloom of the roof, and echoed and returned, and it was almost as if another voice were singing there.

Glory stood by his side and listened; a wonderful peace had come down on her. Then the emotion that vibrated in his deep voice made something surge up to

her throat. "Life for evermore! Life for evermore!" All at once she began to weep, to sob, and to laugh in a breath, and he stopped.

"How ridiculous I am to-day! You'll think me a maniac," she said. But he only took her hand as if she had been a child and led her out of the church.

Insensibly the day had passed into evening, and the horizontal rays of the sun were dazzling their eyes as they returned to the hotel for tea. In giving orders for this meal they had left the illustrated weekly behind, and it was now clear from the easy smiles that greeted them that the paper had been looked at and Glory identified. The room was ready, with the table laid, the window closed, and a fire of wood in the dog-grate, for the chill of evening was beginning to be felt. And to make him forget what had happened at the church she put on a look of forced gaiety and talked rapidly, frivolously, and at random. The fresh air had given her such a colour that they would "fairly eat her to-night." How tired she was, though! But a cup of tea would exhilarate her "like a Johnnie's first whisky and soda in bed."

He looked at her with his grave face; every word was cutting him like a knife. "So you didn't tell the old folks at Glenfaba about the hospital until later?"

"No. Have a cup of 'the girl'? They call champagne 'the boy' at 'the back,' so I call tea 'the girl,' you know."

"And when did you tell them about the music-hall?"

"Yesterday. Muffins?" and as she held out the plate, she waggled the wrist of her other hand and mimicked the cry of the muffin-man.

"Not until yesterday?"

She began to excuse herself. What was the use of taking people by surprise? And then good people were

sometimes so easily shocked. Education and upbringing and prejudices, and even blood——

“Glory,” he said, “if you are ashamed of this life, believe me it is not a right one.”

“Ashamed? Why should I be ashamed? Everybody is saying how proud I should be.”

She spoke feverishly, and by a sudden impulse she plucked up the paper, but as suddenly let it drop again, for, looking at his grave face, her little fame seemed to shrivel up. “But give a dog a bad name, you know . . . You were there on Monday night. Did you see anything, now——anything in the performance——”

“I saw the audience, Glory; that was enough for me. It is impossible for a girl to live long in an atmosphere like that and be a good woman. Yes, my child, impossible! God forbid that I should sit in judgment on any man, still less on any woman; but the women of the music-hall, do they *remain* good women? Poor souls! they are placed in a position so false that it would require extraordinary virtue not to become false along with it! And the whiter the soul that is dragged through that—that mire, the more the defilement. The audiences at such places don’t want the white soul, they don’t want the good woman; they want the woman who has tasted of the tree of good and evil. You can see it in their faces, and hear it in their laughter, and measure it in their applause. Oh, I’m only a priest, but I’ve seen these places all the world over, and I know what I’m saying, and I know it’s true, and you know it’s true, Glory——”

Glory leapt up from the table, and her eyes seemed to emit fire. “I know it’s hard and cruel and pitiless, and since you were there on Monday, and saw how kind the audience was to *me*, it’s personal and untrue as well.”

But her voice broke, and she sat down again, and said in another tone, "But, John, it's nearly a year, you know, since we saw each other last, and isn't it a pity? Tell me, where are you living now? Have you made your plans for the future? Oh, who do you think was with me just before you called yesterday? Polly!—Polly Love, you remember? She's grown stout and plainer, poor thing, and I was so sorry . . . Her brother was in your Brotherhood, wasn't he? Is he as strangely fond of her as ever? Is he? Eh? Don't you understand? Polly's brother, I mean?"

"He's dead, Glory. Yes, dead. He died a month ago. Poor boy! he died broken-hearted. He had come to hear of his sister's trouble at the hospital. I was to blame for that. He never looked up again."

There was silence; both were gazing into the fire, and Glory's mouth was quivering. All at once she said, "John—John Storm, why can't you understand that it's not the same with me as with other women? There seem to be two women in me always. After I left the hospital I went through a good deal. Nobody will ever know how much I went through. But even at the worst somehow I seemed to enjoy and rejoice in everything. Things happened that made me cry, but there was another *me* that was laughing. And that's how it is with the life I am living now. It is not I myself that go through this—this mire, as you call it; it's only my other self, my lower self, if you like; but I am not touched by it at all. Don't you see that? Don't you, now?"

"There are professions which are a source of temptation, and talents that are a snare, Glory——"

"I see, I see what you mean. There are not many ways a woman can succeed in—that's the cruelty of things.

But there are a few, and I've chosen the one I'm fit for. And now—now that I've escaped from all that misery, that meanness, and have brought the eyes of London upon me, and the world is full of smiles for me, and sunshine, and I am happy, you come at last—you that I couldn't find when I wanted you so much, oh, so much! because you had forgotten me—you come to me out of a darkness like the grave, and tell me to give it all up. Yes, yes, yes, that's what you mean—give it all up! Oh, it's cruel!”

She covered her face with her hands and sobbed. He bent over her with a sorrowful face, and said, “My child, if I have come out of a darkness as of the grave, it is because I had *not* forgotten you there, but was thinking of you every day and hour.”

Her sobbing ceased, but the tears still flowed through her fingers.

“Before that poor lad abandoned hope he came out into the world too—stole out—thinking to find his lost one. I told him to look for you first, and he went to the hospital.”

“I saw him.”

“You?”

“It was on New Year's Eve. He passed me in the street.”

“Ah! . . . Well, he came back anyway, and said you were gone, and all trace of you was lost. Did I forget you after that, Glory?”

His husky voice broke off suddenly, and he rose with a look of wretchedness. “You are right, there are two selves in you, and the higher self is so pure, so strong, so unselfish, so noble . . . Oh, I am sure of it, Glory!

Only there's no one to speak to it, no one. I try, but I cannot."

She was still crying behind her hands.

"And meanwhile the lower self—there are only too many to speak to *that*——"

Her hands came down from her disordered face and she said, "I know whom you mean."

"I mean the world."

"No, indeed; you mean Mr. Drake. But you are mistaken. Mr. Drake has been a good friend to me, but he isn't anything else, and doesn't want to be. Can't you see that when you think of me and talk of me as you would of some other women, you hurt me and degrade me, and I cannot bear it? You see I am crying again—goodness knows why. But I shan't give up my profession. The idea of such a thing! It's ridiculous! Think of Glory in a convent! One of the Poor Clares, perhaps!"

"Hush!"

"Or back in the island serving out sewing at a mothers' meeting! Give it up! Indeed I won't!"

"You shall and you must!"

"Who'll make me?"

"I will!"

Then she laughed out wildly, but stopped on the instant, and looked up at him with glistening eyes. An intense blush came over her face, and her looks grew bright as his grew fierce. A moment afterwards the waiting-maid, with an inquisitive expression, was clearing the table, and keeping a smile in reserve for "the lovers' quarrel."

Some of the Guardsmen were in the train going back, and at the next station they changed to the carriage in which Glory and John were sitting. Apparently they had

dined before leaving their club at Maidenhead, and they talked at Glory with covert smiles. "Going to the Colosseum to-night?" said one. "If there's time," said another. "Oh, time enough. The attraction doesn't begin till ten, don't you know, and nobody goes before." "Tell me she's rippin'." "Good, deuced good."

Glory was sitting with her back to the engine, drumming lightly on the window, and looking out at the setting sun. At first she felt a certain shame at the obvious references, but, piqued at John's silence, she began to take pride in them, and shot glances at him from under her half-closed eyelids. John was sitting opposite with his arms folded. At the talk of the men he felt his hands contract and his lips grow cold with the feeling that Glory belonged to everybody now and was common property. Once or twice he looked at them, and became conscious of an impression which had floated about him since he left the Brotherhood, that nearly every face he saw bore the hideous stamp of self-indulgence and sensuality.

But the noises of the train helped him not to hear, and he looked out for London. It lay before them under a canopy of smoke, and now and then a shaft from the setting sun lit up a glass roof, and it glittered like a sinister eye. Then there came from afar, above the creaking and groaning of the wheels and the whistle of the engine, the deep multitudinous murmur of that distant sea. The mighty tide was rising and coming up to meet them. Presently they were dashing into the midst of it, and everything was drowned in the splash and roar.

The Guardsmen, being on the platform side, alighted first, and on going off they bowed to Glory with rather more than easy manners. A dash of the devil prompted her to respond demonstratively, but John had risen and

was taking off his hat to the men, and they were going away discomfited. Glory was proud of him—he was a man and a gentleman.

He put her into a hansom under the lamps outside the station, and her face was lit up, but she patted the dog and said, “You have vexed me, and you needn’t come to see me again. I shall not sing properly this evening or sleep to-night at all, if that is any satisfaction to you, so you needn’t trouble to inquire.”

When he reached home, Mrs. Callender told him of a shocking occurrence at the fashionable wedding at All Saints that morning. A young woman had committed suicide during the ceremony, and it turned out to be the poor girl who had been dismissed from the hospital.

John Storm remembered Brother Paul. “I must bury her,” he thought.

V.

GLORY sang that night with extraordinary vivacity and charm, and was called back again and again. Going home in the cab, she tried to live through the day afresh—every step, every act, every word, down to that triumphant “*I will.*” Her thoughts swayed as with the swaying of the hansom, but sometimes the thunderous applause of the audience broke in, and then she had to remember where she had left off. She could feel that beating against her breast still, and even smell the violets that grew by the pool. He had told her to give up everything, and there was an exquisite thrill in the thought that perhaps some day she would annihilate herself and all her ambitions, and . . . Who knows what then?

This mood lasted until Monday morning, when she

was sitting in her room, dressing very slowly and smiling at herself in the glass, when the cockney maid came in with a newspaper which her master had sent up on account of its long report of the wedding.

"The church of All Saints was crowded with a fashionable congregation, among whom were many notable persons in the world of politics and society, including the father of the bridegroom, the Duke of —, and his brother, the Marquis of —. An arch of palms crossed the nave at the entrance to the chancel, and festoons of rare flowers were suspended from the rails of the handsome screen. The altar and the table of the commandments were almost obscured by the wreaths of exotics that hung over them, and the columns of the colonnade, the font, and the offertory boxes were similarly buried in rich and lovely blossom . . .

"Thanks to an informal rehearsal some days before, the ceremony went off without a hitch. The officiating clergy were the Venerable Archdeacon Wealthy, D.D., assisted by the Rev. Josiah Golightly and other members of the numerous staff of All Saints. The service, which was fully choral, was under the able direction of the well-known organist and choir-master, Mr. Carl Koenig, F.R.C.O., and the choir consisted of twenty adult and forty boy voices. On the arrival of the bride a procession was formed at the west entrance, and proceeded up to the chancel, singing, 'The voice that breathed o'er Eden.'"

"Poor Polly!" thought Glory.

"The bride wore a duchess satin gown trimmed with chiffon and Brussels lace, and having a long train hung from the shoulders. Her tulle veil was fastened with a ruby brooch and with sprays of orange blossom sent specially from the Riviera, and her necklace consisted of

a rope of graduated pearls fully a yard long, understood to have belonged to the jewel-case of Catherine of Russia. She carried a bouquet of flowers (the gift of the bridegroom) brought from Florida, the American home of her family. The bride's mother wore . . . The bridesmaids were dressed . . . Mr. Horatio Drake acted as best man . . ."

Glory drew her breath as with a spasm, and threw down the newspaper. How blind she had been, how vain, how foolish! She had told John Storm that Drake was only a good friend to her, meaning him to understand that thus far she had allowed him to go and no farther. But there was a whole realm of his life into which he did not ask her to enter. The "notable persons in politics and society," "the bridesmaids," these made up his real sphere, his serious scene. Other women were his friends, companions, equals, intimates, and when he stood in the eye of the world it was they who stood beside him. And she? She was his hobby. He came to her in his off hours. She filled up the under side of his life.

With a crushing sense of humiliation she was folding up the newspaper to send it downstairs when her eye was arrested by a paragraph in small type in the corner. It was headed, "Shocking occurrence at a fashionable wedding."

"Oh, good gracious!" she cried. A glance had shown her what it was. It was a report of Polly's suicide.

"At a fashionable wedding at a West-End church on Saturday" (no names), "a young woman who had been sitting in the nave was seen to rise and attempt to step into the aisle, as if with the intention of crushing her way out, when she fell back in convulsions, and on being removed was found to be dead. Happily the attention

of the congregation was at that moment directed to the bride and bridegroom, who were returning from the vestry with the bridal party behind them, and thus the painful incident made no sensation among the crowded congregation. The body was removed to the parish mortuary, and from subsequent inquiries it transpired that death had been due to poison self-administered, and that the deceased was Elizabeth Anne Love (24), of no occupation, but formerly a nurse—a circumstance which had enabled her to procure half an ounce of liquor strychniæ on her own signature at a chemist's where she had been known.

"Oh, God! Oh, God!" Glory understood everything now. "I've a great mind to go to All Saints and shame them." . . . "Oh, it isn't the police I'm afraid of." Polly's purpose was clear. She had intended to fall dead at the feet of the bride and bridegroom and make them walk over her body. Poor, foolish, ineffectual Polly! Her very ghost must be ashamed of the failure of her revenge. Not a ripple of sensation on Saturday, and this morning only a few obscure lines in little print!

Oh, it was hideous! The poor thing's vengeance was theatrical and paltry; but what of the man, wherever he was? What did he think of himself now, with his millions and his murder?—yes, his murder, for what else was it?

An hour later Glory was ringing the bell of a little house in St. John's Wood whereof the upper blinds were drawn. The grating of the garden door slid back and an untidy head looked out.

"Well, ma'am?"

"Don't you remember me, Liza?"

"Lawd, yus, Miss!" and the door was opened immediately; "but I was afeared you was one o' them reportin' people, and my orders is not to answer no questions."

"Has *he* been here then?"

"Blesh ye, no, Miss! He's on 'is way to the Continents. But 'is friend 'as, and he's settled everything 'andsome—I will say that for the gentleman."

Glory felt her gall rising; there was something degrading, almost disreputable, even in the loyalty of Drake's friendship.

"Fancy my not knowing you, Miss, and me at the Moosic 'All a Tuesday night! I 'ope you'll excuse the liberty, but I *did* laugh, and I won't say but I shed a few tears too. Arranged? Yes, the jury and the coroner and everythink. It's to be at twelve o'clock, so you may think I've 'ad my 'ands full. But you'll want to look at 'er, pore thing! Go up, Miss, and mind yer 'ead; there's nobody but 'er friends with 'er now."

The friends proved to be Betty Belmont and her dressing-room companions. When Glory entered they showed no surprise. "The pore child told us all about you," said Betty; and the little one said, "It's your nyme that's caught on, dear. The minute I heard it I said what a top-line for a bill!"

It was the same little bandbox of a bedroom, only now it was darkened, and Polly's troubles were over. There was a slightly-convulsed look about the mouth, but the features were otherwise calm and childlike, for all the dead are innocent.

The three women with demure faces were sipping Benedictine and talking among themselves, and Polly's pug-dog was coiled up on the bare bolster and snoring audibly.

"Pore thing! I don't know how she could 'a done it. But there, that's the worst of this life! It's all in the present and leads to nothing and ain't got no future."

"What could the pore thing do? She wasn't so wonderful pretty; and then men like . . ." "She was str'ight with him, say what yer like. Only she ought to been more patienter, and she needn't 'a been so hard on the laidy neither." "She had everything the heart could wish. Look at her rooms! I wonder who'll——"

Carriages were heard outside, and two or three men came in to do the last offices. Glory had turned her face away, but behind her the women were still talking. "Wait a minute, mister! . . . What a lovely ring! . . . I wish I had a keepsake to remember her by." "Well, and why not? She won't want——"

Glory felt as if she was choking, but Polly's pug-dog had been awakened by the commotion and was beginning to howl, so she took up the little mourner and carried it out. An organ-man somewhere near was playing "Sweet Marie."

The funeral was at Kensal Green, and the four girls were the only followers. The coroner's verdict being *felo-de-se*, the body was not taken into the chapel, but a clergyman met it at the gate and led the way to the grave. Walking with her head down and the dog under her arm, Glory had not seen him at first, but when he began with the tremendous words, "I am the resurrection and the life," she caught her breath and looked up. It was John Storm.

While they were in the carriage the clouds had been gathering, and now some spots of rain were falling. When the bearers had laid down their burden, the spots were large and frequent, and all save one of the men turned and went back to the shelter of the porch. The three women looked at each other, and one of them muttered something about "the dead and the living," and then the

little lady stole away. After a moment the tall one followed her, and from shame of being ashamed the third one went off also.

By this time the rain was falling in a sharp shower and John Storm, who was bareheaded, had opened his book and begun to read: "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of His great mercy to take unto Himself the soul of our dear sister departed——"

Then he saw that Glory was alone by the grave-side, and his voice faltered and almost failed him. It faltered again and he halted when he came to the "sure and certain hope," but after a moment it quivered and filled out, and seemed to say, "Which of us can sound the depths of God's design?" After the "maimed rites" were over, John Storm went back to the chapel to remove his surplice, and when he returned to the grave Glory was gone.

She sang as usual at the music-ball that night, but with a heavy heart. The difference communicated itself to the audience, and the unanimous applause which had greeted her before frayed off at length into separate hand-claps. Crossing the stage to her dressing-room, she met Koenig, who came to conduct for her, and he said—

"Not quite yourself to-night, my dear, eh?"

Going home in the hansom Polly's dog cuddled up with the old sympathy to the new mistress, and seemed to be making the best of things. The household was asleep, and Glory let herself in with a latch-key. Her cold supper was laid ready, and a letter was lying under the turned-down lamp. It was from her grandfather, and had been written after church on Sunday night.

"It is now so long—more than a year—since I saw my runaway and truant, that, notwithstanding the pro-

tests of Aunt Anna and the forebodings of Aunt Rachel, I have determined to give my old legs a journey and my old eyes a treat. Therefore, take warning that I intend to come up to London forthwith, that I may see the great city for the first time in my life, and—which is better—my little granddaughter among all her new friends, and in the midst of her great prosperity.”

At the foot of this there was a postscript from Aunt Rachel hastily scrawled in pencil:—

“Take no notice of this. He is far too weak to travel, and indeed he is really failing; but your letter, which reached us last night, has so troubled him ever since, that he can’t take rest for thinking of it.”

It was the last straw. Before finishing the letter or taking off her hat, Glory took up a telegraph form and wrote, “Postpone journey—am returning home to-morrow.” Then she heard Koenig letting himself into the house, and going downstairs she said—

“Will you take this message to the telegraph office for me, please?”

“Vhy, of course I vill, and den ve’ll have supper together—look!” and he laughed and opened a paper, and drew out a string of sausages.

“Mr. Koenig,” she said, “you were right. I was not myself to-night. I want a rest, and I propose to take one.”

As Glory returned upstairs she heard stammerings, sputterings, and swearings behind her about managers, engagements, announcements, geniuses, children, and other matters. Back in her room she lay down on the floor, with her face in her hands, and sobbed. Then Koenig appeared, panting and saying, “Dere! I knew vhat vould happen! Here’s a pretty ting! And dat’s vhy

Mr. Drake told me to deny you to de man. De brute, de beast, de dirty son of a monk!"

But Glory had leapt up with eyes of fire and was crying, "How dare you, sir? Out of my room this instant."

"Mein Gott! It's a devil!" Koenig was muttering like a servant as he went downstairs. He went out to the telegraph office and came back, and then Glory heard him frying his sausages on the dining-room fire.

The night was far gone when she pushed aside her untouched supper, and wiping her eyes that she might see properly, sat down to write a letter:—

"DEAR JOHN STORM (monk, monster, or whatever it is!),—I trust it will be counted to me for righteousness that I am doing your bidding and giving up my profession—for the present.

'Between a woman's "yes" and "no,"
There isn't room for a pin to go,'

which is very foolish of her in this instance, considering that she is earning various pounds a night and has nothing but Providence to fall back upon. I have told my jailer I must have my liberty, and, being a man of like passions with yourself, he has been busy blaspheming in the parlour downstairs. I trust virtue will be its own reward, for I dare say it is all I shall ever get. If I were Narcissus I should fall in love with myself to-day, having shown an obedience to tyranny which is beautiful and worthy of the heroic age. But to-morrow morning I go back to the 'oilan,' and it will be so nice up there without anybody and all alone."

She was laughing softly to herself as she wrote and catching her breath with a little sob at intervals.

"A letter now and then is profitable to the soul of

man—and woman—but you must not expect to hear from *me*, and as for you, though you *have* resurrected yourself, I suppose a tyrant of your opinions will continue the Benedictine rule which compels you to hold your peace—and other things. I am engaged to breakfast with a nice girl named Glory Quayle to-morrow morning—that is to say, *this* morning—at Euston Station at a quarter to seven, but happily this letter won't reach you until 7.30, so I'll just escape interruption."

The house was still and the streets were quiet, not even a cab going along.

"Good-bye! I've realised—a dog! It's a pug, and therefore, like somebody else, it always looks black at me, though I suspect its father married beneath him, for it talks a good deal and evidently hasn't been brought up in a Brotherhood. Therefore, being a 'female,' I intend to call it Aunt Anna—except when the original is about. Aunt Anna has been hopping up and down the room at my heels for the last hour, evidently thinking that a rational woman would behave better if she went to bed. Perhaps I shall take a leaf out of your book and 'comb her hair' when I get her all alone in the train to-morrow, that she may be prepared for the new sphere to which it has pleased Providence to call her.

"Good-bye again! I see the lamps of Euston running after each other, only it's the *other* way this time. I find there is something that seizes you with a fiercer palpitation than coming *into* a great and wonderful city, and that is going out of one. Dear old London! After all, it has been very good to me. No one, it seems to me, loves it as much as I do. Only somebody thinks... Well, never mind! Good-bye 'for all.' GLORY."

At seven next morning, on the platform 'at Euston, Glory was standing with melancholy eyes at the door of a first-class compartment watching the people sauntering up and down, talking in groups and hurrying to and fro, when Drake stepped up to her. She did not ask what had brought him—she knew. He looked fresh and handsome, and was faultlessly dressed.

“You are doing quite right, my dear,” he said in a cheerful voice. “Koenig telegraphed and I came to see you off. Don't bother about the theatre, leave everything to me; take a rest after your great excitement and come back bright and well.”

The locomotive whistled and began to pant, the smoke rose to the roof, the train started, and before Glory knew she was going she was gone.

Then Drake walked to his club and wrote this postscript to a letter to Lord Robert Ure at the Grand Hotel, Paris: “The Parson has drawn first blood, and Gloria has gone home.”

VI.

ON the Sunday evening after Glory's departure John Storm, with the bloodhound running by his side, made his way to Soho in search of the mother of Brother Andrew. He had come to a corner of a street where the walls of an ugly brick church ran up a narrow court and turned into a still narrower lane at the back. The church had been for some time disused, and its façade was half covered with hoardings and plastered with placards: “Brighton and Back, 3s.” “Lloyd's News.” “Coals, 1s. a cwt.” and “Barclay's Sparkling Ales.”

There was a tumult in the court and lane. In the midst of a close-packed ring of excited people, chiefly

foreigners, shouting in half the languages of Europe, a tall young cockney, with bloated face and eyes aflame with drink, was writhing and wrestling and cursing. Sometimes he escaped from the grasp of the man who held him, and then he flung himself against the closed door of a shop which stood opposite, with the three balls of the pawnbroker suspended above it. Somebody within the shop was howling for help. It was a woman's voice, and the louder she screamed the more violent were the man's efforts to beat down the door between them.

As John Storm stood a moment looking on, someone on the street beside him said, "It's a d—— shyme." It was a man with a feeble, ineffectual face, and the appearance of a waiter. Seeing he had been overheard, the man stammered, "Beg parding, sir; but they may well say 'When the Devil can't come hisself 'e sends 'is brother Drink.'" Having said this he began to move along, but stopped suddenly on seeing what the clergyman with the dog was doing.

John Storm was pushing his way through the crowd, and his black figure in that writhing ring of undersized foreigners looked big and commanding. "What's this?" he was saying in a husky voice that rose clear above the clamour. The shouting and swearing subsided, all save the howling from the inside of the shop, and the tumult settled down in a moment to mutterings and gnashings and a broken and irregular silence.

Then somebody said, "It's nothink, sir." And somebody else said, "'E's on'y drunk, and wantin' to pench 'is mother." Without listening to this explanation John Storm had laid hold of the young man by the collar and was dragging him, struggling and fuming, from the door.

"What's going on?" he demanded. "Will nobody speak?"

Then a poor swaggering imitation of a man came up out of the cellar of a house that stood next to the disused church, and a comely young woman carrying a baby followed close behind him. He had a gin-bottle in his hands, and with a wink he said, "A christenin'—that what's goin' on. 'Ave a keppele o' pen'orth of 'ollands, old gel?"

At this sally the crowd recovered its audacity and laughed, and the drunken man began to say that he could "knock spots out of any bloomin' parson, 'en no bloomin' errer."

But the young fellow with the gin-bottle broke in again. "What's yer gyme, mister? Preach the gawspel? Give us trecks? This is my funeral, down't ye know, and I'd jest like to hear."

The little foreigners were enjoying the parson-baiting, and the drunken man's courage was rising to fever heat. "I'll give 'im one-two between the eyes if 'e touches me again." Then he flung himself on the pawnshop like a battering-ram, the howling inside, which had subsided, burst out afresh, and finally the door was broken down.

Half-a-minute afterwards the crowd was making a wavering dance about the two men. "Look out, ducky," the young fellow shouted to John. The warning came too late—John went reeling backwards from a blow.

"Now, my lads, who says next?" cried the drunken ruffian. But before the words were out of his mouth there was a growl, a plunge, a snarl, and he was full length on the street with the bloodhound's muzzle at his throat.

The crowd shrieked and began to fly. Only one

person seemed to remain. It was an elderly woman, with dry and straggling grey hair. She had come out of the pawnshop and thrown herself on the dog in an effort to rescue the man underneath, crying, "My son—oh, my son! It'll kill him! Tyke the beast away!"

John Storm called the dog off, and the man got up unhurt and nearly sober. But the woman continued to moan over the ruffian and to assail John and his dog with bitter insults. "We want no truck with parsons 'ere," she shouted.

"Stou thet, mother. It was my fault," said the sobered man, and then the woman began to cry; and the next minute John Storm was going with mother and son into the shut-up pawnshop, and the unhinged door was being propped behind them.

The crowd was trailing off when he came out again half-an-hour afterwards, and the only commotion remaining was caused by a belated policeman asking, "Wot's bin the matter 'ere?" and by the young fellow with the gin-bottle performing a step-dance on the pavement before the entrance to the cellar. The old woman stood at her door wiping her eyes on her apron, and her son was behind with a face that was now red from other causes than drink and rage.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Pincher; I may see you again soon."

Hearing this, the young swaggerer stopped his step-dancing and cried, "What cheer, myte? Was it a blowter and a cup of cawfy?"

"For shyme, Charlie!" cried the girl with the baby, and the young fellow answered, "Shut yer 'ead, Aggie!"

The waiter was still at the corner of the court, and when John came up he spoke again. "There must be sem amoosement knockin' women abart, but I can't see

it myself." Then in a simple way he began to talk about his "missis," and what a good creature she was, and finally announced himself "gyne" to help a parson "as stood up to that there drunken bloke for sake of a woman."

"What's your name?" said John.

"Jupe," said the man, and then something stirred in John's memory.

On the following day John Storm dined with his uncle at Downing Street. The Prime Minister was waiting in the library. In evening dress, with his back to the fireplace and his hands enlaced behind him he looked even more thin and gaunt than before. He welcomed John with a few familiar words and a smile. His smile was brief and difficult, like that which drags across the face of an invalid. Dinner was announced immediately, and the old man took the young one's arm and they passed into the dining-room.

The panelled chamber looked cold and cheerless. It was lighted by a single lamp in the middle of the table. They took their seats at opposite sides. The statesman's thin hair shone on his head like streaks of silver. John exercised a strong physical influence upon him, and all through the dinner his bleak face kept smiling.

"I ought to apologise for having nobody to meet you, but I had something to say—something to suggest—and I thought perhaps——"

John interrupted with affectionate protestations, and a tremor passed over the wrinkles about the old man's eyes.

"It is a great happiness to me, my dear boy, that you have turned your back on that Brotherhood, but I presume you intend to adhere to the Church?"

John intended to take priest's orders without delay, and then go on with his work as a clergyman.

"Just so, just so"—the long tapering fingers drummed on the table—"and I should like to do something to help you."

Then sipping at his wine-glass of water, the Prime Minister, in his slow, deep voice and official tone, began to detail his scheme. There was a bishopric vacant. It was only a colonial one—the Bishopric of Colombo. The income was small, no more than seventeen hundred pounds, the work was not light, and there were eighty clergy. Then a colonial bishopric was not usually a stepping-stone to preferment at home, yet still——

John interrupted again. "You are most kind, uncle, but I am only looking forward to living the life of a poor priest, out of sight of the world and the Church."

"Surely Colombo is sufficiently out of sight, my boy?"

"But I see no necessity to leave London."

The Prime Minister glanced at him steadily, with the concentrated expression of a man who is accustomed to penetrate the thoughts and feelings of another.

"Why then—why did you——"

"Why did I leave the monastery, uncle? Because I had come to see that the monastic system was based on a faulty ideal of Christianity, which has been tried for the greater part of nineteen hundred years and failed. The theory of monasticism is that Christ died to redeem our carnal nature, and all we have to do is to believe and pray. But it is not enough that Christ died once. He must be dying always—every day—and in every one of us. God is calling on us in this age to seek a new social application of the Gospel, or, shall I say, to go back to the old one."

"And that is?"

"To present Christ in practical life as the living

Master and King and example, and to apply Christianity to the life of our own time."

The Prime Minister had not taken his eyes off him. "What does this mean?" he had asked himself, but he only smiled his difficult smile and began to talk lightly. If this creed applied to the individual, it applied also to the State; but think of a Cabinet conducting the affairs of a nation on the charming principles of "taking no thought for the morrow," and "loving your enemies," and "turning the other cheek," and "selling all and giving to the poor"!

John stuck to his guns. If the Christian religion could not be the ultimate authority to rule a Christian nation, it was only because we lacked faith and trusted too much to mechanical laws made by statesmen rather than to moral laws made by Christ. "Either the life of Christ, as the highest standard and example, means something or it means nothing. If something, let us try to follow it; but if nothing, then, for God's sake, let us put it away as a cruel, delusive, and damnable mummery."

The Prime Minister continued to ask himself, "What is the key to this?" and to look at John as he would have looked at a problem that had to be solved, but he only went on smiling and talking lightly. It was true we said a prayer and took an oath on the Bible in the Houses of Parliament, but did anybody think for a moment that we intended to trust the nation to the charming romanticism of the politics of Jesus? As for the Church, it was founded on Acts of Parliament; it was endowed and established by the State; its head was the Sovereign, its clergy were Civil servants who went to levées and hung on the edge of drawing-rooms and troubled the knocker of No. 10 Downing Street. And as

for Christ's laws, in this country they were interpreted by the Privy Council and were under the direct control of a State department. Still, it was a harmless superstition that we were a Christian nation. It helped to curb the masses of the people, and if that was what John was thinking of——

The Prime Minister paused and stopped.

"Tell me, my boy," touching John's arm, "do you intend yourself to live . . . in short, the . . . well, after the example of the life of Christ?"

"As far as my weak and vain and sinful nature will permit, uncle!"

"And in what way would you propose to apply your new idea of Christianity?"

"My experiment would be made on a social basis, sir, and first of all in relation to woman." John was hot all over, and his face had flushed up to the eyes.

The Prime Minister glanced stealthily across the table, passed his thin hand across his forehead and thought, "So that's how it is!" But John was deep in his theme and saw nothing. The present position of women was intolerable. Upon the well-being of women, especially of working women, the whole welfare of society rested. Yet what was their condition? Think of it—their dependence on man, their temptations, their rewards, their punishments! Three-halfpence an hour was the average wage of a working woman in England!—and that in the midst of riches, in the heart of luxury, and with one easy and seductive means of escape from poverty always open. Ruin lay in wait for them, and was beckoning them and enticing them in the shape of dancing-houses and music-halls and rich and selfish men.

"Not one man in a million, sir, would come through

such an ordeal unharmed. And yet what do we do?—what does the Church do for these brave creatures on whose virtue and heroism the welfare of the nation depends? If they fall, it cuts them off, and there is nothing before them but the streets or crime or the Union or suicide. And meanwhile it marries the men who have tempted them, to the snug and sheltered darlings for whose wealth or rank or beauty they have been pushed aside. Oh, uncle, when I walk down Regent Street in the daytime I am angry, but when I walk down Regent Street at night I am ashamed. And then to think of the terrible solitude of London to working girls who want to live pure lives—the terrible spiritual loneliness!”

John’s voice was breaking, but the Prime Minister had almost ceased to hear. Thinking he had realised the truth at last, his own youth seemed to be sitting before him and he felt a deep pity.

“Coffee here or in the library, your Lordship?” said the man at his elbow.

“The library,” he answered, and taking John’s arm again he returned to the other room. There was a fire burning now, and a book lay under the lamp on a little table, with a silver paper-cutter through the middle to mark the page.

“How you remind me of your mother sometimes, John! That was just like her voice, do you know—just!”

Two hours afterwards he led John Storm down the long corridor to the hall. His bleak face looked soft and his deep voice had a slight tremor. “Good-night, my dear boy, and remember your money is always waiting for you. Until your Christian Social State is established you are only an advocate of Socialism, and may fairly use your own. If yours is the Christianity of the first

century it has to exist in the nineteenth, you know. You can't live on air or fly without wings. I shall be curious to see what approach to the Christian ideal the condition of civilisation admits of. Yet I don't know what your religious friends and the humdrum herd will think of you—mad probably, or at least weak and childish, and perhaps even a hunter after easy popularity. But good-night, and God bless you in your people's church and Devil's Acre."

John was flushed and excited. He had been talking of his plans, his hopes, his expectations. God would provide for him in this as in everything, and then God's priest ought to be God's poor. Meantime two gentlemen in plush waited for him at the door. One handed him his hat, the other his stick and gloves.

Then with regular steps, and his hands behind him, the Prime Minister paced back through the quiet corridors. Returning to the library, he took up his book and tried to read. It was a novel, but he could not attend to the incidents in other people's lives. From time to time he said to himself, "Poor boy! Will he find her? Will he save her?" One pathetic idea had fixed itself on his mind—John Storm's love of God was love of a woman, and she was fallen and wrecked and lost.

A fortnight later John wrote to Glory:—

"Fairly under weigh at last, dear Glory! Taken priest's orders, got the Bishop's 'licence to officiate,' and found myself a church. It is St. Mary Magdalene's, Crown Street, Soho, a district that has borne for three hundred years the name of the 'Devil's Acre,' bears it still, and deserves it. The church is an old proprietary place, licensed, not consecrated, formerly belonging to Greek, or Italian, or French, or some other refugees, but

long shut up and now much out of repair. Present owners, a company of Greek merchants, removed from Soho to the City, and being too poor (as trustees) to renovate the structure, they have forced me to get money for that purpose from my uncle, the Prime Minister. But the money is my own, apparently, my uncle having in my interest demanded from my father ten thousand pounds out of my mother's dowry, and got it. And now I am spending two thousand pounds on the repair of my church buildings, notwithstanding the protests of the Prime Minister, who calls me 'chaplain to the Greek-Turks,' and of Mrs. Callender, who has discovered that I am a 'maudlin, sentimental, daft young spendthrift.' Dare-say I am all that and a good deal more, as the wise world counts wisdom—but it matters little.

"Have not waited for the workmen, though, to begin operations. Took first services last Sunday. No organist, no choir, no clerk, and next to no congregation. Just the church cleaner, a good, simple old soul named Pincher, her son, a reformed drunkard and pawnbroker, and another convert who is a club waiter. Nevertheless I went through the whole service, morning and evening, prayers, psalms, and sermon. God will be the more glorified.

"Have started my new crusade on behalf of women, too, and made various processions of three persons through the streets of Soho. First, my pawnbroker bearing the banner (a white cross, the object of various missiles), next, my waiter carrying a little harmonium, and familiarly known as the 'organ-man,' and finally myself in my cassock. Last mentioned proves to be a highly popular performance, being generally understood to be a man in a black petticoat. We have had the nightly accompaniment of a much larger procession, though, calling

themselves 'Skellingtons,' otherwise the 'Skeletons,' an army of low women and roughs who live vulture lives on this poor, soiled, grimy, forgotten world. Thank God, the ground of evil-doers is in danger, and they know it!

"Behind my church, in a dark unwholesome alley called Crook Lane, we have a clergy-house, at present let out in tenements, the cellar being occupied as a gin-shop. As soon as these premises can be cleared of their encumbrances I shall turn them into a club for working-girls. Why not? In the old days the Church came to the people: let it come to the people now. Here we are in the midst of this mighty stronghold of the devil's kingdom of sin and crime. Foreign clubs, casinos, dancing academies and gambling houses are round about us. What are we to do? Put up a forest of props (as at the Abbey) and keep off touch and contamination? God forbid! Let us go down into these dens of moral disease and disinfect them. The poor working-girls of Soho want their Sunday: give it them. They want music and singing: give it them. They want dancing: give them that also; for God's sake give it them in your churches, or the devil will give it them in his hells!

"Expect to be howled at, of course. Some good people will think I am either a fanatic or an artful schemer, while the clerical place-seekers, who love the flesh-pots of Egypt and have their eyes on the thrones of the Church and the world, will denounce my 'secularity,' and tell me I am feeding the 'miry troughs' of the publican and sinner. No matter, if only God is pleased to vouchsafe 'signs following.' And one weary-faced lonely girl grown fresh of countenance and happy of mien, or one bright little woman snatched from the brink of

perdition, will be a better fruit of religion than some of them have seen for many a year.

"As soon as the workmen have cleared out I am going to establish a daily service, and keep the church open always. Still at Mrs. Callender's, you see; but I am refusing all invitations, except as a priest, and already I don't seem to have time to draw my breath. No income connected with St. Mary Magdalene's, or next to none, just enough to pay the caretaker; but I must not complain of that, for it is the accident to which I owe my church, nobody else wanting it under the circumstances. I had begun to think my time in the monastery wasted, but God knew better. It will help me to live the life of poverty, of purity, of freedom from the world.

"Love to the grandfather and the ladies. How I wish you were with me in the thick of the fight! Sometimes I dream you are, too, and I fancy I see you in the midst of these bright young things, with their flowers and feathers—they will make beautiful Christians yet! Oddly enough, on the day you travelled to the island, every hour that took you farther away seemed to bring you nearer. Greetings!"

VII.

GLENFABA, "THE OILAN."

OH, gracious and grateful friend, at length you have remembered the existence of the "poor lone critter" living in dead-alive land! Only that I lack gall to make oppression bitter, I should of course return your belated epistle by the Dead Letter Office, marked "Unknown" across your "Dear Glory," there being no longer anybody in these regions who has a plausible claim to that dubious title. But, alas! I am not my own woman now, and with tears

of shame I acknowledge that *any* letter from London comes like an angel's whisper breathed to me through the air.

I daresay you have been unreasonable enough to think that I ought to have written to tell you of my arrival; and knowing that man is born to vanity as the sparks fly upwards, I have more than once intended to take pen in hand and write; but there is something so sleepy in this island atmosphere that my good resolution has hitherto been a still-born babe that has breathed but never cried!

Know, then, that my journey hither was performed with due celerity, and no further disaster than befalls me when, as usual, I have *done* those things which I ought not to have done, and left *undone* those things which I ought to have done—the former, in this instance, having reference to various bouts of crying, which drew forth the sympathy of a compassionate female sharper in the train—and the latter to the catch of my satchel, which enabled that obliging person to draw forth my embroidered pocket-handkerchief in exchange.

I was in good time for the steamboat at Liverpool, and it was crowded, according to its wont, with the Lancashire lads and lasses, in whom affection is as contagious as the mumps. Being in the dumps myself on sailing out of the river, and thinking of the wild excitement with which I had sailed into it, I think I should have found that I had not *done* crying, in both senses, but for the interest of watching an amiable Bob Brierley, who, with his arm about the waist of the person sitting next to him, kept looking round at the rest of the world, from time to time, with the innocence of one whose left hand didn't know what his right hand was doing.

But we had hardly crossed the bar when the prince of the powers of the air began to envy the happiness of these dear young goodies; and if you had seen the weather for the next four hours, you would have agreed that the devil must have had a hand in it! Up came a wave over the after quarter, and down went the passengers below decks, staggering and screaming like brewery rats, and then on we came, like the Israelites out of Egypt, on eagles' wings! Having lost my own sea-legs a little, I thought it prudent to go down too, with my doggie tucked under my arm, and finding a berth in the ladies' cabin, I fell asleep and didn't awake until we were on the cross current just off the island, when, amid moans and groans and other noises, I heard the tearful voice of a sick passenger asking, "Is there any hope, stewardess?"

The train got to Peel as the sun was setting behind the grim old castle walls, and when I saw the dear little town again I dropped half a tear, and even felt an insane desire to run out to meet it. Grandfather was at the station with old "Cæsar" and the pony carriage, and when I had done kissing him and he had done panting and puffing and talking nonsense, as if I had been Queen Victoria and the Empress of the French rolled into one, I could have cried to see how small and feeble he had become since I went away. We could not get off immediately, for in his simple joy at my return he was hailing everybody and everybody was hailing him, and the dear old Pharisee was sounding his trumpet so often in the market-place, that he might have glory of men, that I thought we should never get up to Glenfaba that night. When we did so at length, the old aunties were waiting at the gate, and then he broke into exclamations again. "Hasn't she grown tall? Look at her! Hasn't she now?"

Whereupon the aunties took up their parable with, "Well, well! Aw, well! Aw, well now! Well, ye navar!" So that by the time I got through I had kissed everybody a dozen times, and was as red over the eyes as a grouse.

Then we went into the house, and for the first five minutes I couldn't tell what had come over the old place to make it look so small and mean. It was just as if the walls of the rooms had been the bellows of a concertina and somebody had suddenly shut them. But there was the long clock clucking away on the landing, and there was Sir Thomas Traddles purring on the hearthrug, and there were the same plates on the dresser, and the same map of Africa over the fireplace, with a spot of red ink where my father died.

The moon was glistening on the sea when I went to bed that night, and when I got up in the morning the sun was shining on it, and a crow cut across my window cawing, and I heard grandfather humming to himself on the path below. And after my long spell in London, and my railway journey of the day before, it was the same as if I had fallen asleep in a gale on the high seas and awakened in a quiet harbour somewhere.

So here I am, back at Glenfaba, in my old little room with my old little bed, and everything exactly as it used to be; and I begin to believe that when you went into that monastery you only just got the start of me in being dead. There used to be a few people in this place, but now there doesn't seem to be a dog left. All the youngsters have "gone foreign," and all the oldsters have gone to—"goodness knows which." Sometimes we hear the bleat of sheep on the mountains, and sometimes the scream of seagulls overhead, and sometimes we hold

a convocation of all living rooks in the elms on the lawn. We take no thought for the morrow, what we shall eat or what we shall put on, and on Sundays when the church-bell rings we go out, like the Israelites in the wilderness, in clothes which wax not old after forty years. During the rest of the week we watch the blue-bottles knocking their stupid heads against the ceiling, and listen to the grasshoppers whispering in the grass, and fall asleep to the hum of the bees, and awake to the *hee-haw* of old Neilus's "canary."* Such is the dead-alive life we live at Glenfaba, and the days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if . . . Ohoy! (A yawn.)

I suppose it is basely ungrateful of me to talk like this, for the dear place itself is lovely enough to disturb one's hope of paradise, and this very morning is as fresh as the dew on the grass, with the larks singing above, and the river singing below, and clouds like little curls of foam hovering over the sea. And as for my three dear old dunces, who love me so much more than I deserve, I am ashamed in my soul when I overhear them planning good things for me to eat, and wild excitements for me to revel in, that I may not be dull or miss the luxuries I am accustomed to. "Do you know I'm afraid Glory doesn't care so much for pinjane after all," I heard grandfather whispering to Aunt Anna one morning, and half an hour afterwards he was reproving Aunt Rachel for pressing me too hard to serve at the soup-kitchen.

They govern me like a child in pinafores, and of course like a child I revenge myself by governing all the house. But, oh dear, oh dear! gone are the days when I could live on water-gruel and be happy in a go-cart.

* Donkey.

Yes, the change is in me, not in them or in the old home, and what's the good of putting back the clock when the sun is so stubbornly keeping pace? I might be happy enough at Glenfaba still, if I could only bring back the days when the garden trees were my gymnasium, and I used to rock myself and sing like a bird on a bough in the wind, or when I led a band of boys to rob our own orchard—a bold deed, for which Bishop Anna oftentimes launched at me and all her suffragans her severest censure—it was her slipper, I remember. But I can't run barefoot all day long on the wet sand now, with the salt spray blowing in my face, and a young lady of one-and-twenty seldom or never rushes out to play dumps and baggy-mug in public with little girls of ten.

As a result, my former adventures are now limited to careering on the back of little "Cæsar," who has grown so ancient and fat that he waddles like an old duck, and riding him is like working your passage. So I confine myself to sitting on committees, and being sometimes sat upon, and rubbing the runes for grandfather, and cleaning the milk-pails for Aunt Anna, and even such holy kill-times as going to church regularly, and watching Neilus when he is passing round the plate after "Let your light so shine before men"—light to his practical intellect being clearly a synonym for silver in the shape of three-penny bits!

But, oh my! oh my! I am a dark character in this place for all that. The dear old goodies have never yet said a syllable about my letter announcing that I had gone over to the enemy (*i.e.* Satan and the music-hall), and there is a dead hush in the house as often as the wind of conversation veers in that direction. This is nothing, though, to the white awe in the air when visitors

call and I am questioned how I earn my living in London. I hardly know whether to laugh or cry at the long-drawn breath of relief when I wriggle out of a tight place without telling a lie. But you can't hide an eel in a sack, and I know the truth will pop out one of these days. Only yesterday I went district-visiting with Aunt Rachel, and one of the Balaams of life, who keeps a tavern for fishermen, lured us into his bar parlour to look at a portrait of "Gloria" which he had cut out of an illustrated paper and pinned up on the wall "because it resembled me so much!" Oh dear, oh dear! I could have found it in my heart to brazen it out on the spot at this sight of my evil fame; but when I saw poor little auntie watching me with fearful eyes, I talked away like a mill-wheel, and went out thanking God that the rest of the people of Peel were not as other men are, or even as this publican.

I have been getting newspapers myself, though, sent by my friend Rosa; and as long as the mis-reporters concerned themselves with my own doings and failures to do, and lied as tenderly as an epitaph about my disappearance from London, I cut them up and burnt them. But when they forgot me, and began to treat of other people's triumphs, I made Neilus my waste-paper basket, on the understanding that the papers were to go to the fishermen just home from Kinsale. Then from time to time he told me they were "goin' round, Miss, goin' round," and gave me other assurances of "the greatest circulation in the world," which was true enough certainly, though the old thief omitted to say it was at the paper-mill, where they were being turned into pulp.

But, heigho! I don't need newspapers to remind me of London. Like St. Paul, I have a devil that beats me

with fists, and as often as a clear day comes, and one can see things a long way off, he makes me climb to the top of Slieu Whallin,* that I may sit on the beacon by the hour and strain my eyes for a glimpse of England, feeling like Lot's wife when she looked back on her old home, and then coming down with a heavy heart and a taste of tears in my mouth as if I had been turned into a pillar of salt. Dear old London! But I suppose it is going on its way just as it used to do, with its tides of traffic and its crowds and carriages, and wandering merchants and hawkers crying their wares, and everything the same as ever, just the same, although Glory isn't there!

10.30 P.M.—I had to interrupt the writing of my letter this morning owing to an alarm of illness seizing grandfather. He had been taken with a sudden faintness. Of course we sent for the doctor, but before he arrived the faintness had passed; so he looked wise at us, like a prize-riddle which had to be guessed before his next visit, left us his autograph (a wonderful hieroglyphic), and went away. Since then grandfather has been in the hands of a less taciturn practitioner, whom he calls the "flower of Glenfaba" (that's me), and after talking nonsense to him all day, and playing chess with him all the evening, I have put him to bed laughing, and come back to my own room to finish my letter with an easier mind. For the last half-hour the aurora has been pulsing in the northern sky, and I have been thinking that the glorious phantasmagoria must be the sign of a gale in heaven, just as sleet and mist and black wind are the signs of a gale on earth. But it has tripped off into nothingness, and only the dark night

* A mountain in Man.

is left, through which the dogs at Knockaloe are keeping up their private correspondence with the dogs at Ballamoar by the medium of their nightly howls.

Oh dear! Only 10.30! And to know that while we are going to bed by country hours, with nearly everything still and dead around us, London is just beginning to bestir itself! When I lie down and try to sleep, I shall see the wide squares, with their statues of somebody inside, and the blaze of lights over the doors of the theatres, and all the tingling life of the great and wonderful city. Ugh! It makes one feel like one's own ghost wandering through the upper rooms and across the dark landings, and hearing the strains of the music and the sounds of the dancing from the ballroom below-stairs!

But, my goodness! (I can still swear on that, you see, and not be forsworn!) "What's the odds if you're jolly?—and I allus is!" How's your dog? Mine would write you a letter, only her heart is moribund, and if things go on as they are going she must set about making her will. In fact, she is now lying at the foot of my bed thinking matters out, and bids me tell you that after various attempts to escape Home Rule, not being (like her mistress) one of those natures made perfect through suffering, she is only "kept alive by the force of her own volition" in this house that is full of old maids, and has nothing better in it than one old cat, and he isn't worth hunting, being destitute of a tail. Naturally she is doing her best (like somebody else) to keep herself unspotted from that world which is a source of so much temptation, but she is bound to confess that a little "divilment" now and then would help her to take a more holy and religious view of life.

I "wish you happy" in your new enterprise; but if

you are going in for being the champion of woman in this world—of her wrongs—I warn you not to be too pointed in your moral, for there is a story here of a handsome young curate who was so particular in the pulpit with “Lovest thou me?” that a lady followed him into the vestry and admitted that she did. Soberly, it is a great and noble effort, and I’ve half a mind to love you for it. If men want women to be good they *will* be good, for women dance to the tune that men like best, and always have done so since the days of Adam—not forgetting that gentleman’s temptation, nor yet his excuse about “the woman *Thou gavest* me,” which shows he wasn’t much of a husband anyway, though certainly he hadn’t much choice of a wife.

My love to dear old London! Sometimes I have half a mind to skip off and do my wooing myself. Perhaps I should do so, only that Rosa writes that she would like to come and spend her summer holiday in Peel. Haven’t I told you about Rosa? She’s the lady journalist that Mr. Drake introduced me to.

“But let’s to bed,
Said Sleepyhead.”

GLORY.

P.S.—IMPORTANT.—Ever since I left London I have been tormented with the recollection of poor Polly’s baby. She put him out to nurse with the Mrs. Jupe you heard of, and that person put him out to somebody else. While the mother lived I had no business to interfere, but I can’t help thinking of the motherless mite now, and wondering what has become of him. I suppose that like Jeshurun he waxeth fat and kicketh by this time, yet it would be the act of a man and a clergyman if anybody would take

up my neglected duty and make it his business to see that there is somebody to love the poor child. Mrs. Jupe's address is 5A The Little Turnstile, going from Holborn into Lincoln's Inn Field's.

VIII.

It was on a Saturday morning that John Storm received Glory's letter, and on the evening of the same day he set out in search of Mrs. Jupe's. The place was not easy to find, and when he discovered it at length, he felt a pang at the thought that Glory herself had lived in this dingy burrowing. As he was going up to the door of the little tobacco-shop a raucous voice within was saying, "That's what's doo on the byeby, and until you can pye up you needn't be a-kemmin' 'ere no more." At the next moment a young woman crossed him on the threshold. She was a little slender thing, looking like a flower that has been broken by the wet. He recognised her as the girl who had nursed the baby in Crook Lane on the day of his first visit to Soho. She was crying, and to hide her swollen eyes she dropped her head at passing, and he saw her faded ribbons and soiled straw hat.

A woman of middle age behind the counter was curtsying to his clerical attire, and a little girl at the door of an inner room was looking at him out of the corner of her eyes, with head aslant.

"Father Storm, I think, sir. Come in and set you down, sir. Mind the shop, Booboo. My 'usband 'as told me about ye, sir. 'You'll know 'im at onct, Lidjer,' 'e sez, siz 'e. No, 'e ain't 'ome from the club yet, but 'e might be a-kemmin' in any time now, sir."

John Storm had seated himself in the little dark parlour, and was looking round and thinking of Glory.

"No matter; my business is with you, Mrs. Jupe," he answered, and at that the twinkling eyes and fat cheeks, which had been doing their best to smile, took on a look of fear.

"Wot's the metter?" she asked, and she closed the door to the shop.

"Nothing, I trust, my good woman," and then he explained his errand.

Mrs. Jupe listened attentively and seemed to be asking herself who had sent him.

"The poor young mother is dead now, as you may know, and——"

"But the father ain't," said the woman sharply, "and, begging your parding, sir, if 'e want's ter know where the byeby is 'e can come 'isself and not send sembody else!"

"If the child is well, my good woman, and well cared for——"

"It *is* well keared for, and it's gorn to a pusson I can trust."

"Then what have you got to conceal? Tell me where it is, and——"

"Not me! If it's 'is child, and 'e wants it, let 'im pye for it, and interest ep ter dite. Them swells is too fond of gettin' parsons to pull their chestnuts out o' the fire."

"If you suppose I am here in the interests of the father, you are mistaken, I do assure you."

"Ow, you do, do yer?"

Matters had reached this pass when the door opened and Mr. Jupe came in. Off went his hat with a respectful salutation, but seeing the cloud on his wife's face, he abridged his greeting. The woman's apron was at her eyes in an instant.

"Wot's gowin' on?" he asked. John Storm tried to explain, but the woman contented herself with crying.

"Well, it's like this, don'tcher see, Father. My missis is that fond of childring, and it brikes 'er 'art——"

Was the man a fool or a hypocrite?

"Mr. Jupe," said John, rising, "I'm afraid your wife has been carrying on an improper and illegal business——"

"Now stow thet, sir," said the man, wagging his head. "I respects the Reverend Jawn Storm a good deal, but I respects Mrs. Lidjer Jupe a good deal more, and when it comes to improper and illegal bizness——"

"Down't mind 'im, 'Enery," said the wife, now weeping audibly.

"And down't you tyke on so, Lidjer," said the husband, and they looked as if they were about to embrace.

John Storm could stand no more. Going down the court he was thinking with a pang of Glory—that she had lived months in the atmosphere of that impostor—when somebody touched his arm in the darkness. It was the girl. She was still crying.

"I reckerleck seeing you in Crook Lane, sir, the day we christened my byeby, and I waited, thinking p'raps you could help me."

"Come this way," said John, and walking by his side along the blank wall of Lincoln's Inn Fields, the girl told her story. She lived in one room of the clergy-house at the back of his church. Having to earn her living, she had answered an advertisement in a Sunday paper, and Mrs. Jupe had taken her baby to nurse. It was true she had given up all claim to the child, but she could not help going to see it—the little one's ways were so engaging. Then she found that Mrs. Jupe had let it out to

somebody else. Only for her "friend" she might never have heard of it again. He had found it by accident at a house in Westminster. It was a fearful place, where men went for gambling. The man who kept it had just been released from eighteen months' imprisonment, and the wife had taken to nursing while the husband was in prison. She was a frightful woman, and he was a shocking man, and "they knocked the children about cruel." The neighbours heard screams and slaps and moans, and they were always crying "Shame!" She had wanted to take her own baby away, but the woman would not give it up because there were three weeks' board owing, and she could not pay.

"Could you take me to this house, my child?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then come round to the church after service to-morrow night."

The girl's tearful face glistened like April sunshine. "And will you help me to get my little girl? Oh, how good you are! Everybody is saying what a Father it is that's come to . . ." She stopped, then said quite soberly, "I'll get somebody to lend me a shawl to bring 'er 'ome in. People say they pawn everything, and perhaps the beautiful white perlice I bought for 'er . . . Oh, I'll never let 'er out of my sight again, never!"

"What is your name, my girl?"

"Agatha Jones," the girl answered.

It was nearly eleven o'clock on Sunday night before they were ready to start on their errand. Meantime Aggie had done two turns at the foreign clubs, and John Storm had led a procession through Crown Street, and been hit by a missile thrown by a "Skeleton," whom he declined to give in charge. At the corner of the alley he stopped

to ask Mrs. Pincher to wait up for him, and the girl's large eyes caught sight of the patch of plaster above his temple.

"Are you sure you want to go, sir?" she said.

"There's no time to lose," he answered. The bloodhound was with him; he had sent home for it since the attempted riot.

As they walked towards Westminster she told him where she had been, and what money she had earned. It was ten shillings, and that would buy so many things for baby.

"To-morrow I'll get a cot for her—one of those wicker ones; iron is so expensive. She'll want a pair o' socks, too; and by-and-by she'll 'ave to be shortened."

John Storm was thinking of Glory. He seemed to be retreading the steps of her life in London. The dog kept close at his heels.

"She'll 'a bin a month away now—a month to-morrow. I wonder if she's growed much—I wonder! It's wrong of people letting their childring go away from them. I'll never go out at nights again—not if I 'ave to tyke in sewing for the slop-shops. See this!" laughing nervously, and showing a shawl that hung on her arm. "It's to bring 'er 'ome in—the nights is so chill for a byeby."

John's heart was heavy at sight of these little preparations, but the young mother's face was radiant.

As they went by the Abbey, under its forest of scaffolding, and, walking towards Millbank, dipped into the slums that lie in the shadow of the dark prison, they passed soldiers from the neighbouring barracks going arm-in-arm with girls, and this made Aggie talk of her "friend," and cry a little, saying it was a week since she had seen him, and she was afraid he must have 'listed. She knew

he was rude to people sometimes, and she asked pardon for him, but he wasn't such a bad boy after all, and he never knocked you about except when he was drinking.

The house they were going to was in Angel Court, and having its door only to the front, it was partly sheltered from observation. A group of women with their aprons over their heads stood talking in whispers at the corner. One of them recognised Aggie, and asked if she had got her child yet, whereupon John stopped and made some inquiries. The goings-on at the house were scandalous. The men who went to it were the lowest of the low, and there was scarcely one of them who hadn't "done time." The man's name was Sharkey, and his wife was as bad as he was. She insured the children at seven pounds apiece, and "Lawd love ye, sir, at that price the poor things is worth more dead nor alive!"

Aggie's face was becoming white, and she was touching John Storm's elbow as if pleading with him to come away, but he asked further questions. Yes, there were several children. A twelve months' baby, a boy, was fretful with his teething, and on Sunday nights, when the woman was wanted downstairs, she just put the poor darling to bed and locked the room. If you lived next door you could hear his crying through the wall.

"Agatha," said John, as they stepped up to the door, "get us both into this house as best you can, then leave the rest to me. Don, lie close."

Aggie tapped at the door. A little slide in it was run back, and a voice said, "Who's there?"

"Aggie," the girl answered.

"Who's that with you?"

"A friend of Charlie's," and then the door was opened.

John crossed the threshold first, the dog followed

him, the girl entered last. When the door had closed behind them, the doorkeeper, a young man holding a candle in his hand, was staring at John with his whole face open.

"Hush! Not a word! Don, watch that man!"

The young man looked at the dog and turned pale.

"Where is Mrs. Sharkey?"

"Downstairs, sir."

There were sounds of men's voices from below, and from above there came the convulsive sobs of a child, deadened as by a door between.

"Give me your candle."

The man gave it.

"Don't speak or stir, or else——"

John glanced at the dog, and the man trembled.

"Come upstairs, child," and the girl followed him to the upper floor.

On reaching the room in which the baby was crying they tried the door. It was locked. John attempted to force it, but it would not yield. The child's sobs were dying down to a sleepy moan.

Another room stood open and they went in. It was the living-room. A kettle on the fire was singing and puffing steam. There was no sign of a key anywhere. Only a table, some chairs, a disordered sofa, certain sporting newspapers lying about, and a few pictures on the walls. Some of the pictures were of racehorses, but all the rest were memorial cards, and one bore the text, "He shall gather them in His arms." Aggie was shuddering as with cold, being chilled by some unknown fear.

"We must go down to the cellar—there's no help for it," said John.

The man in the hall had not spoken or stirred. He

was still gazing in terror on the bloodshot eyes looking out of the darkness. John gave the candle to the girl, and began to go noiselessly downstairs. There was not a movement in the house now. Big Ben was striking. It was twelve o'clock.

At the next moment John Storm was midway down, and had full view of the den. It was a washing cellar, with a coal vault going out of it under the street. Some fifteen or twenty men, chiefly foreigners, were gathered about a large table covered with green baize, on which a small lamp was burning. A few of the men were seated on chairs ranged about, the others were standing at the back in rows two deep. They were gambling. The game was faro. Rows of lucifer matches were laid on the table, half-crowns were staked on them, and cards were cut and dealt. Except the banker, a middle-aged man with the wild eye of the hard spirit-drinker, everybody had his face turned away from the cellar stairs.

They did not smoke or drink, and they only spoke to each other when the stakes were being received or paid. Then they quarrelled and swore in English. After that there was a chilling and hideous silence, as if something awful were about to occur. The lamp cast a strong light on the table, but the rest of the room was darkened by patches of shadow.

The coal vault had been turned into a drinking bar, and behind the counter there was a well-stocked stillage. In the depths of its shade a woman sat knitting. She had a gross red and white face, and in the arch above her was the iron grid in the pavement. Somebody on the street walked over it, causing a hollow sound, as of soil falling on a coffin.

John Storm was no coward, but a certain tremor

passed over him on finding himself in this subterranean lurking-place of men who were as beasts. He stood a full minute unseen. Then he heard the woman say in a low hiss, "Cat's mee-e-et!" and he knew he had been observed. The men turned and looked at him, not suddenly or all at once, but furtively, cautiously, slowly. The banker crouched at the table with an astonished face, and tried to smuggle the cards out of sight.

John stood calmly, his whole figure displaying courage and confidence. The group of men broke up. "He's got the coppers," said one. Nobody else spoke, and they began to melt away. They disappeared through a door at the back, which led into a yard, for, like rats, the human vermin always have a second way out of their holes.

In half a minute the cellar was nearly empty. Only the banker and the woman and one young man remained. The young man was Charlie.

"What cheer, myte?" he said with an air of unconcern. "Is it trecks ye want, sir? Here ye are then," and he threw a pack of cards at John's feet.

"It's that gel o' yawn that's done this," said the woman.

"So it's a got-up thing, is it," said Charlie, and, stepping to the counter, he took up a drinking-glass, broke it at the rim and holding its jagged edges outwards, turned to use it as a weapon.

John Storm had not yet spoken, but a magnetic instinct warned him. He whistled, and the dog bounded down. The young man threw his broken glass on the floor and cried to the keeper of the house, "Don't stir, you! First you know, the beast will be at yer throat."

Hearing Charlie's voice, Aggie was creeping down the stairs. "Charlie!" she cried. Charlie threw open his

coat, stuck his fingers in the armholes of his waistcoat, said in a voice of hatred, passion, and rage, "Go and pawn yourself!" and then swaggered out at the back-door. The keeper made show of following, but John Storm called on him to stop. The man looked at the dog and obeyed. "Wot d'ye want o' me?" he said.

"I want this girl's baby. That's the first thing I want. I'll tell you the rest afterwards."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" The man's grimace was frightful.

"It's gone, sir. We've lost it," said the woman, with a hideous expression.

"That story will not pass with me, my good woman. Go upstairs and unlock the door! You too, my man—go on!"

A minute later they were in the bedroom above. Three neglected children lay asleep on bundles of rags. One of twelve months old was in a wicker cradle, one of three years was in a wooden cot, and a younger child was in a bed. Aggie had come up behind, and stood by the door trembling and weeping.

"Now, my girl, find your baby," said John, and the young mother hurried with eager eyes from the cradle to the cot, and from the cot to the bed.

"Yes, here it is," she cried. "No—oh no, no!" and she began to wring her hands.

"Told yer so," said the woman, and with a wicked grin she pointed to a memorial card which hung on the wall.

Aggie's child was dead and buried. Diarrhœa! The doctor at the dispensary had given a certificate of death, and Charlie had shared the insurance money. "Wish to Christ it was ended," he had said. He had been drunk ever since.

The poor girl was stunned. She was no longer crying. "Oh, oh, oh! What shall I do?" she said.

"Whose child is this?" said John, standing over the wicker cradle. The little sufferer from inflamed gums had sobbed itself to sleep.

"A real laidy's," said the woman. "Mrs. Jupe told us to tyke great kear of it. The father is Lord something."

"My poor girl," said John, turning to Aggie, "could you carry this child home for me?"

"Oh, oh, oh!" said the girl, but she wrapped the shawl about the child and lifted it up sleeping.

"Now, you down't!" said the man, putting himself on guard before the door. "That child is worth undrids of pounds to me, and——"

"Stand back, you brute!" said John, and with the girl and her burden he passed out of the house.

The front door stood open and the neighbourhood had been raised. Trollopy women in their under-petticoats and with their hair hanging about their necks were gathered at the end of the court. Aggie was crying again, and John pushed through the crowd without speaking.

They went back by Broad Sanctuary, where a solitary policeman was pacing to and fro on the echoing pavement. Big Ben was chiming the half-hour after midnight. The child coughed like a sheep constantly, and Aggie kept saying, "Oh, oh, oh!"

Mrs. Pincher, in her widow's cap and white apron, was waiting up for them, and John committed the child to her keeping. Then he said to Aggie, who was turning away, "My poor child, you have suffered deeply, but if you will leave this man I will help you to begin life again, and if you want money I will find it."

"Well, he *is* a Father and no mistake!" said Mrs Pincher, but the girl only answered in a hopeless voice—

"I don't want no money, and I don't want to begin life again."

As she crossed the court to her room in the tenement house they heard her "Oh, oh, oh!"

Before going to bed that night John Storm wrote to Glory:—

"Hurrah! Have got poor Polly's baby, so you may set your heart at ease about it. All the days of my life I have been thought to be a dreamer, but it is surprising what a man can do when he sets to work for somebody else! Your former landlady turns out to be the wife of my 'organ-man,' and it was pitiful to see the dear old simpleton's devotion to his bogus little baggage. I have lost him, of course, but that was unavoidable.

"It was by help of another victim that I traced the child at last. She is a ballet-girl of some sort, and it was as much as I could stand to see the poor young thing carrying Polly's baby, her own being dead and buried without a word said to her. Short of the grace of God she will go to the bad now. Oh, when will the world see that in dealing with the starved hearts of these poor fallen creatures God Almighty knows best how to do His own business? Keep the child with the mother, foster the maternal instinct, and you build up the best womanhood. Drag them apart, and the child goes to the dogs and the mother to the devil.

"But Polly's baby is safely lodged with Mrs. Pincher, a dear old grandmotherly soul who will love it like her own, and all the way home I have been making up my mind to start baby-farming myself on fresh lines. He

who wrongs the child commits a crime against the State. However low a woman has fallen she is a subject of the Crown, and if she is a mother she is the Crown's creditor. These are my first principles, the application will come anon. Meantime you have given me a new career, a glorious mission! Thank God and Glory Quayle for it for ever and ever! Then—who knows?—perhaps you will come back and take it up yourself some day. When I think of the precious time I spent in that monastery... But no, only for that I should not be here.

"Oh, life is wonderful! But I feel afraid that I shall wake up—perhaps in the street somewhere—and find I have been dreaming. Deeply grieved to hear of the grandfather's attack. Trust it has passed. But if not, certain I am that all is well with him, and that he is stayed only on God.

"Hope you are well and plodding through this wilderness in comfort, avoiding the thorns as well as you can. Glenfaba may be dull, but you do well to keep out of the whirlpool of London for the present. Yours is a snug spot, and when storms are blowing even the seagulls shelter about your house, I remember. . . . But why Rosa? Is Peel the only place for a summer holiday?"

IX.

GLENFABA.

OH, my dear John Storm, is it coals of fire you are heaping on my head, or fire of brimstone? Your last letter with its torrents of enthusiasm came sweeping down on me like a flood. What work you are in the midst of! What a life! What a purpose! While I—I am lying here like an old slipper thrown up on the sea-beach. Oh, the pity of't, the pity of't! It must be glorious to be in the

rush and swirl of all this splendid effort, whatever comes of it! One's soul is thrilled, one's heart expands! As for me, the garden of my mind is withering, and I am consuming the seed I ought to sow.

Rosa has come. She has been here a month nearly, and is just charming, say what you will. Her thoughts have the dash of the great world, and I love to hear her talk. True, she troubles me sometimes, but that's only my envy and malice and all uncharitableness. When she tells of Betty-this and Ellen-that, and their wonderful successes and triumphs, I'm the meanest sinner that crawls.

It's funny to see how the old folk bear themselves towards her. Aunt Rachel regards her as a sort of an artist, and is clearly afraid that she will break out into madness in spots somewhere. Aunt Anna disapproves of her hair, which is brushed up like a man's, and of her skirt, which "would be no worse if it were less like a pair of breeches," for she has brought her "bike." She talks on dangerous subjects also, and nobody did such things in auntie's young days. Then she addresses the old girlies as I do, and calls grandfather "Grand-dad," and, like the witch of Endor generally, is possessed of a familiar spirit. Of course I give her various warning looks from time to time lest the fat should be in the fire, but she's a woman, bless her! and it's as true as ever it was that a woman can keep the secret she doesn't know.

Yes, the ideal of womanhood has changed since the old aunties were young; but when I listen to Rosa, and then look over at Rachel with her black ringlets, and at Anna with her old-fashioned "front," I shudder and ask myself, "Why do I struggle?" What is the reward if one gives up the fascination of life and the world? There is

no reward. Nothing but solitary old maidism, unless two of you happen to be sisters, for who else will join her shame to yours? Dreams, dreams, only dreams! Dreams of the dearest thing that ever comes into a woman's arms—and then you awake and there is no one there. A dame's school when the old father is gone, but no children of your own to love you, nobody to think of you, scraping a little here, pinching a little there, growing older and smaller year by year, looking yellow and craned like an apple that has been kept on the top shelf too long, and then . . . the end.

Oh, but I'm trying so hard, so very hard, to be "true to the higher self in me," because somebody says I must. What do you think I did last week? In my character of Lady Bountiful I gave an old folks' supper in the soup-kitchen, understood to be in honour of my return. Roast beef and plum-duff, not to speak of pipes and 'baccy, and forty old people of both sexes sitting down to "the do." After supper there was a concert, when Chalse (the fat old thief!) overflowed the "elber" chair, and alluded to me as "our beautiful donor," and lured me into singing "Mylecharaine," and leading the company when we closed with the doxology.

But "it was not myself at all, Molly dear, 'twas my shadow on the wall," and in any case man can't live by soup-kitchens alone—nor woman either. And knowing what a poor, weak, vain woman I am at the best, I ask myself sometimes would it not be a thousand times better if I yielded to my true nature instead of struggling to realise a bloodless ideal that is not me in the least, but only my picture in the heart of someone who thinks me so much better than I am?

Not that anybody ever sees what a hypocrite I can be,

though I came near to letting the cat out of the bag as lately as last night. You must know that when I turned my back on London at the command of John Knox the second, I brought all my beautiful dresses along with me, except such of them as were left at the theatre. Yet I daren't lay them out in the drawers, so I kept them under lock and key in my boxes. There they lurked like evil spirits in ambush, and as often as their perfume escaped into the room my eyes watered for another sight of them! But in spite of all temptation I resisted, I conquered, I triumphed—until last night, when Rosa talked of Juliet, what a glorious creature she was, and how there was nobody on the stage who could “look” her and “play” her too!

What do you think I did? Shall I tell you? Yes, I will. I crept upstairs to my quiet little room, tugged the box from its hiding-place under the bed, drew out my dresses—my lovely, lovely brocades—and put them on! Then I spoke the potion speech, beginning in a whisper, but getting louder as I went on, and always looking at myself in the glass. I had blown out the candle, and there was no light in the room but the moon that was shining on my face; but I was glowing, my very soul was afire, and when I came to the end I drew myself up with eyes closed and head thrown back and heart that paused a beat or two and said, “*I—I am Juliet, for I am a great actress!*”

Oh, oh, oh! I could scream with laughter to think of what happened next! Suddenly I became aware of somebody knocking at my door (I had locked it) and of a thin voice outside saying fretfully, “Glory, whatever is it? Aren't you well, Glory?” It was the little Auntie; and thinking what a shock she would have if I opened

the door and she came upon this grand Italian lady instead of poor little me, I had to laugh and to make excuses while I smuggled off my gorgeous things and got back into my plain ones!

It was a narrow squeak; but I had a narrower one some days before. Poor grandfather! He regards Rosa as belonging to a superior race, and loves to ask her what she thinks of Glory. He has grown quite simple lately, and as soon as he thinks my back is turned he is always saying, "And what is your opinion of my granddaughter, Miss Macquarrie?" To which she answers, "Glory is going to make your name immortal, Mr. Quayle." Then his eyes sparkle and he says, "Do you think so?—do you really think so?" Whereupon she talks further balderdash, and the dear old darling smiles a triumphant smile!

But I always notice that not long afterwards his eyes look wet and his head hangs low, and he is saying to the aunties, with a crack in his voice, "She'll go away again. You'll see she will. Her beauty and her talents belong to the world." And then I burst in on them and scold them, and tell them not to talk nonsense.

Nevertheless he is beginning to regard Rosa with suspicion, as if she were a witch luring me away, and one evening last week we had to steal into the garden to talk that we might escape from his watchful eyes. The sun had set—there was the red glow behind the castle across the sky and the sea, and we were walking on the low path by the river under the fuchsia hedge that hangs over from the lawn, you know. Rosa was talking with her impetuous dash of the great career open to anyone who could win the world in London, how there were people enough to help her on, rich men to find her op-

portunities, and even to take theatres for her, if need be. And I was hesitating and halting and stammering, "Yes, yes, if it were the *regular* stage . . . who knows . . . perhaps it might not be open to the same objections . . ." when suddenly the leaves of the fuchsia rustled as with a gust of wind, and we heard footsteps on the path above.

It was the grandfather, who had come out on Rachel's arm and overheard what I had said! "It's Glory!" he faltered, and then I heard him take his snuff and blow his nose as if to cover his confusion, thinking I was deceiving them and carrying on a secret intercourse. I hardly know what happened next, except that for the five minutes following "the great actress" had to talk with the tongues of men and angels (Beelzebub's) in order to throw dust in the dear old eyes and drive away their doubts. It was a magnificent performance, "you go bail." I'll never do the like of it again, though I had only one old man and one old maid and one young woman for audience. The house "rose" at me too, and the poor old grandfather was appeased. But when we were back indoors I overheard him saying, "After all, there's no help for it. She's dull with us—what wonder! We can't cage our linnet, Rachel, and perhaps we shouldn't try. A song-bird came to cheer us, but it will fly away. We are only old folks, dear—it's no use crying." And on going to his room that night he closed his door and said his prayers in a whisper that I might not hear him when he sobbed.

He hasn't left his bed since. I fear he never will. More than once I have been on the point of telling him there is no reason to think the deluge would come if I *did* go back to London; but I will never leave him now. Yet I wish Aunt Rachel wouldn't talk so much of the

days when I went away before. It seems that every night, on his way to his own room, he used to step into my empty one and come out with his eyes dim and his lips moving. I am not naturally hard-hearted, but I can't love grandfather like that. Oh, the cruelty of life! . . . I know it ought to be the other way about . . . but I can't help it.

All the same I could cry to think how short life is, and how little of it I can spare. "Cling fast to me and hold me," my heart is always saying, but meantime London is calling to me, calling to me like the sea, and I feel as if I were a wandering mermaid, and she were my ocean home.

LATER.

Poor, poor grandfather! I was interrupted in the writing of my letter this morning by another of those sudden alarms. He had fainted again, and it is extraordinary how helpless the aunties are in a case of illness. Grandfather knows it too; and after I had done all I could to bring him round, he opened his eyes and whispered that he had something to say to me alone. At that the poor old things left the room with tears of woe and a look of understanding. Then fetching a difficult breath, he said, "*You* are not afraid, Glory, are you?" and I answered him, "No," though my heart was trembling. And then a feeble smile struggled through the wan features of his drawn face, and he told me his attack was only another summons. "I'll soon die for good," he said, "and you must be strong and brave, my child, for death is the common lot, and then what is there to fear?" I didn't try to contradict him—what was the good of doing that? And after he had spoken of the coming time he talked quietly of his past life, how he had weathered the storm

for seventy odd years, and his Almighty Father was bringing him into harbour at last. "I can't pray for life any longer, Glory. Many a time I did so in the old days when I had to bring up my little granddaughter, but my task is over now, and after the day is done, where is the tired labourer who does not lie down to his rest with a will?"

The doctor has been and gone. There is no ailment, and nothing to be done or hoped. It is only a general failure and a sinking earthwards of the poor worn-out body as the soul rises to the heaven that is waiting to receive it. What a pagan I feel beside him! And how glad I am that I didn't talk of leaving him again when he was on the eve of his far longer journey! I have sent the aunties to bed, but Rosa has made me promise to waken her at four that she may take her turn at his bedside.

NEXT MORNING.

Rosa relieved me during the night, and I came to my room and lay down in the chillness of the dawn. But now I am sorry that I allowed her to do so, for I did not sleep, and grandfather appears to have been troubled with dreams. I fancied he shuddered a little as I left them together, and more than once through the wall I heard him cry, "Bring him back," in the toneless voice of one who is labouring under the terrors of a nightmare. But each time I heard Rosa comforting him, so I lay down again without going in.

Being stronger this morning, he has been propped up in bed writing a letter. When he called for the pens and paper, I asked if I couldn't write it for him, but the old darling made a great mystery of the matter, and looked artful, and asked if it was usual to fight your

enemy with his own powder and shot. Of course I humoured him and pretended to be mighty curious, though I think I know who the letter was written to, all the same that he kept the address side of the envelope hidden even when the front of it was being sealed. He sealed it with sealing-wax, and I held the candle while he did so, with his poor trembling fingers in danger from the light, and then I stamped it with my mother's pearl ring, and he smuggled it under the pillow.

Since breakfast he has shown an increased inclination to doze, but there have been visits from the wardens and from neighbouring parsons, for a *locum tenens* has had to be appointed. Of course they have all inquired where his pain is, and on being told that he has none, they have gone downstairs cackling and clucking and crowing in various versions of "Praise God for that!" I hate people who are always singing the Doxology.

NOON.

Condition unchanged, except that in the intervals of drowsiness his mind has wandered a little. He appears to live in the past. Looking at me with conscious eyes, he calls me "Lancelot"—my father's name. It has been so all the morning. One would think he was walking in a twilight land where he mistakes people's faces and the dead are as much alive as the living.

They all think I am brave, oh, so brave! because I do not cry now, as everybody else does—even Aunt Anna behind her apron—although my tears can flow so easily, and at other times I keep them constantly on tap. But I am really afraid, and down at the bottom of my heart I am terrified. It is just as if *something* were coming into the house slowly, irresistibly, awfully, and casting its shadow on the floor already.

I have found out the cause of his outcries in the night. Aunt Rachel says he was dreaming of my father's departure for Africa. That was twenty-two years ago, but it seems that the memory of the last day has troubled him a good deal lately. "Don't you remember it?" he has been saying. "There were no railways in the island then, and we stood at the gate to watch the coach that was taking him away. He sat on the top and waved his red handkerchief. And when he had gone and it was no use watching, we turned back to the house—you and Anna and poor, pretty young Elise. He never came back, and when Glory goes again she'll never come back either."

In the intervals of his semi-consciousness, when he mistakes me for my father, my wonderful bravery often fails me, and I find excuses for going out of the room. Then I creep noiselessly through the house and listen at half-open doors. Just now I heard him talking quite rationally to Rachel, but in a voice that seemed to speak inwardly, not outwardly, as before. "She can't help it, poor child," he said. "Some day she'll know what it is, but not yet, not until she has a child of her own. The race looks forward, not backward. God knew when he created us that the world couldn't go on without that bit of cruelty, and who am I that I should complain?"

I couldn't bear it any longer, and with a pain at my heart I ran in and cried, "I'll never leave you, grandfather." But he only smiled and said, "I'll not be keeping you long, Glory, I'll not be keeping you long," and then I could have died for shame.

EVENING.

All afternoon he has been like a child, and everything present to his consciousness seems to have been reversed. The shadow of eternity appears to have wiped out time.

When I have raised him up in bed he has delighted to think he was a little boy in his young mother's arms. Oh, sweet dream! The old man, with his furrowed forehead and beautiful white head and all the heavy years rolled back! More than once he has asked me if he may play till bedtime, and I have stroked his wrinkled hands and told him "Yes," for I pretend to be his mother, who died when she was old.

But the "part" is almost too much for me, and lest I should break down under the strain of it, I am going out of his room constantly. I have just been into his study. It is as full as ever of his squeezes and rubbings and plaster casts and dusty old runes. He has spent all his life away back in the tenth century, and now he is going farther, farther. . . .

Oh, I am weary, weary! If anything happens to grandfather I shall soon leave this place; there will be nothing to hold me here any longer, and besides I could not bear the sight of these evidences of his gentle presence, so simple, so touching. But what a vain thing London is with all its vast ado—how little, how pitiful!

LATER.

It is all over. The curtain has fallen, and I am not crying. If I did cry, it would not be from grief, but because the end was so beautiful, so glorious! It was at sunset, and the streamers of the sun were coming horizontally into the room. He awoke from a long drowsiness, and a serenity almost angelic overspread his face. I could see that he was himself once again. Death had led him back through the long years since he was a child, and he knew he was an old man and I a young woman. "Have the boats gone yet?" he asked, meaning the her-

ring-boats that go at sunset. I looked out, and told him they were at the point of going. "Let me see them sail," he said; so I slipped my arms about him, and raised him until he was sitting up and could see down the length of the harbour and past the castle to the sea. The reflection of the sunlight was about his silvery old head, and over the damps and chills of death it made a radiance on his face like a light from heaven. There was hardly a breeze, and the boats were dropping down from their berths with their brown sails half set. "Ah," he said, "it's the *other* way with me, Glory. I'm coming in, not going out. I've been beating to windward all my life, but I see the harbour on my lee-bow at last as plainly as I ever saw Peel, and now I'm only waiting for the top of the tide and the master of the port to run up the flag!"

Then his head fell gently back on my arm and his lips changed colour, but his eyes did not close, and over his saintly face there passed a fleeting smile. Thus died a Christian gentleman—a simple, sunny, merry, happy, childlike creature, and of such are the kingdom of heaven.

GLORY.

Parson Quayle's Letter.

DEAR JOHN,—Before this letter reaches you, or perhaps along with it, you will receive the news that tells you what it is. I am "in," John; I can say no more than that. The doctor tells me it may be now or then or at any time. But I am looking for my enlargement soon, and whether it comes to-morrow sunset or with to-day's next tide, I leave myself in His hands in whose hands we all are. Well has the wise man said, "The day of our death is better than the day of our birth," so

with all good-will, and what legacy of strength old age has left to me, I send you my last word and message.

My poor old daughters are sorely stricken, but Glory is still brave and true, being, as she always was, a quivering bow of steel. People tell me that the poor mother is strong in the girl, and the spirit of the mother's race; but well I know the father's stalwart soul supports her; and I pray God that when my dark hour comes her loving and courageous arms may be around me.

That brings me to the object of my letter. This living will soon be vacant, and I am wondering who will follow in my feeble steps. It is a sweet spot, John! The old church does not look so ill when the sun shines on it, and in the summer-time this old garden is full of fruit and flowers. Did I ever tell you that Glory was born here? I never had another grandchild, and we were great comrades from the first. She was a wise and winsome little thing, and I was only an old child myself, so we had many a run and romp in these grounds together. When I try to think of the place without her, it is a vain effort and a painful one; and even while she was away in your great and wicked Babylon, with its dangers and temptations, her little ghost seemed to lurk at the back of every bush and tree, and sometimes it would leap out on me and laugh.

It is months since I saw your father, but they tell me he has lately burnt his bureau, making one vast bonfire of the gatherings of twenty years. That is not such ill news either; and maybe, now the great ado that worked such woe is put by and gone, he would rejoice to see you back at home, and open his hungering arms to you.

But my eyes ache and my pen is shaking. Farewell! Farewell! Farewell! An old man leaves you his blessing,

John. God grant that in His own good time we may meet in a blessed paradise, rejoicing in His gracious mercy, and all our sins forgiven! ADAM QUAYLE.

X.

GLORY's letter and its enclosure fell on John Storm like rain in the face of a man on horseback—he only whipped up and went faster.

"How can I find words," he wrote, "to express what I feel at your mournful news? Yet why mournful? His life's mission was fulfilled, his death was a peaceful victory, and we ought to rejoice that he was so easily released. I trust you will not mourn too heavily for him, or allow his death to stop your life. It would not be right. No trouble came near his stainless heart, no shadow of sin; his old age was a peaceful day which lasted until sunset. He was a creature that had no falsetto in a single fibre of his being, no shadow of affectation. He kept like this through all our complicated existence in this artificial world, absolutely unconscious of the hollowness and pretension and sham that surrounded him—tolerant, too, and kind to all. Then why mourn for him? He is gathered in—he is safe.

"His letter was touching in its artful simplicity. It was intended to ask me to apply for his living. But my duty is here, and London must make the best of me. Yet more than ever now I feel my responsibility with regard to yourself. The time is not ripe to advise you. I am on the eve of a great effort. Many things have to be tried, many things attempted. It is a gathering of manna—a little every day. To God's keeping and protection meantime I commit you. Comfort your aunts, and

let me know if there is anything that can be done for them."

The ink of this letter was hardly dry when John Storm was in the middle of something else. He was in a continual fever now. Above all, his great scheme for the rescue and redemption of women and children possessed him. He called it Glory's scheme when he talked of it to himself. It might be in the teeth of nineteenth-century morality, but what matter about that? It was on the lines of Christ's teaching when He forgave the woman and shamed the hypocrites. He would borrow for it, beg for it, and there might be conditions under which he would steal for it too.

Mrs. Callender shook her head.

"I much misdoubt there'll be scandal, laddie. It's a woman's work, I'm thinking."

"'Be thou as chaste as ice,' auntie, 'as pure as snow' . . . But no matter! I intend to call out the full power of a united Church into the warfare against this high wickedness. Talk of the union of Christendom! If we are in earnest about it we'll unite to protect and liberate our women."

"But where's the siller to come frae, laddie?"

"Anywhere—everywhere! Besides, I have a bank I can always draw on, auntie."

"You're no meaning the Prime Minister again, surely?"

"I mean the King of Kings. God will provide for me in this as in everything."

Thus his reckless enthusiasm bore down everything, and at the back of all his thoughts was the thought of Glory. He was preparing a way for her; she was coming back to a great career, a glorious mission; her bright soul would shine like a star; she would see that he had been

right and faithful, and then . . . then . . . But it was like wine coursing through his veins—he could not think of it.

Three thousand pounds had to be found to buy or build homes with, and he set out to beg for the money. His first call was at Mrs. Macrae's. Going up to the house, he met the lady's poodle in a fawn-coloured wrap coming out in charge of a footman for its daily walk round the square.

He gave the name of "Father Storm," and after some minutes of waiting he was told that the lady had a headache and was not receiving that day.

"Say the nephew of the Prime Minister wishes to see her," said John.

Before the footman had returned again there was the gentle rustle of a dress on the stairs, and the lady herself was saying, "Dear Mr. Storm, come up. My servants are real tiresome, they are always confusing names."

Time had told on her; she was looking elderly, and the wrinkles about her eyes could no longer be smoothed out. But her "front" was curled, and she was still saturated in perfume.

"I heard of your return, dear Mr. Storm," she said in the languid voice of the great lady, but the accent of St. Louis, as she led the way to the drawing-room. "My daughter told me about it. She was always interested in your work, you know . . . Oh yes, quite well, and having a real good time in Paris. Of course you know she has been married. A great loss to me naturally, but being God's will, I felt it was my duty as a mother . . ." and then a pathetic description of her maternal sentiments, consoled by the circumstance that her son-in-law belonged to "one of the best families," and that she was constantly getting newspapers from "the other side" containing full

accounts of the wedding and of the dresses that were worn at it.

John twirled his hat in his hand and listened.

"And what are your dear devoted people doing down there in Soho?"

Then John told of his work for working girls, and the great lady pretended to be deeply interested. "Why, they'll soon be better than the upper classes," she said.

John thought it was not improbable, but he went on to tell of his scheme, and how small was the sum required for its execution.

"Only three thousand! That ought to be easily fixed up. Why, certainly!"

"Charity is the salt of riches, madam, and if rich people would remember that their wealth is a trust——"

"I do—I always do. 'Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth'—what a beautiful text *that* is!"

"I'm glad to hear you say so, madam. So many Christian people allow that God is the God of the widow and fatherless, while the gods they really worship are the gods of silver and gold."

"But I love the dear children, and I like to go to the institution to see them in their nice white pinafores making their curtsies. But what you say is real true, Mr. Storm; and since I came from Sent Louis I've seen considerable people who are that silly about cats . . ." and then a long story of the folly of a lady friend who had once had a pet Persian, but it died, and she wore crape for it, and you could never mention a cat in her hearing afterwards.

At that moment the poodle came back from its walk, and the lady called it to her, fondled it affectionately, said it was a present from her poor dear husband, and launched

into an account of her anxieties respecting it, being delicate and liable to colds, notwithstanding the trousseau (it was a lady poodle) which the fashionable dog tailor in Regent Street had provided for it.

John got up to take his leave. "May I then count on your kind support on behalf of our poor women and children of Soho?"

"Ah, of course, that matter . . . Well, you see, the Archdeacon kindly comes to talk 'City' with me—in fact, I'm expecting him to-day—and I never do anything without asking his advice, never, in my present state of health—I have a weak heart, you know," with her head aside and her saturated pocket-handkerchief at her nose. "But has the Prime Minister done anything?"

"He has advanced me two thousand pounds."

"Really?" rising and kicking back her train. "Well, as I say, we ought to fix it right away. Why not hold a meeting in my drawing-room? All denominations, you say? I don't mind—not in a cause like that," and she glanced round her room as if thinking it was always possible to disinfect it afterwards.

Somebody was coughing loudly in the hall as John stepped downstairs. It was the Archdeacon coming in. "Ah," he exclaimed with a flourish of the hand, greeting John as if they had parted yesterday and on the best of terms. Yes, there *had* been changes, and he was promoted to a sphere of higher usefulness. True, his good friends had looked for something still higher, but it was the premier archdeaconry at all events, and in the Church, as in life generally, the spirit of compromise ruled everything. He asked what John was doing, and on being told, he said with a somewhat more worldly air, "Be careful, my dear Storm, don't encourage vice. For

my part, I am tired of the 'fallen sister.' To tell you the truth, I deny the name. The painted Jezebel of the Piccadilly pavement is no sister of mine."

"We don't choose our relations, Archdeacon," said John. "If God is our Father, then all men are our brothers, and all women are our sisters whether we like it or not."

"Ah! The same man still, I see. But we will not quarrel about words. Seen the dear Prime Minister lately? Not *very* lately? Ah, well"—with a superior smile—"the air of Downing Street, it's *so* bad for the memory, they say," and coughing loudly again, he stepped upstairs.

John Storm went home that day light-handed but with a heavy heart.

"Begging is an ill trade on a fast day, laddie," said Mrs. Callender. "Sit you down, and tak' some dinner."

"How dare these people pray, 'Our Father which art in heaven'? It's blasphemy! It's deceit!"

"Aye, and they would deceive God about their dividends if He couldn't see into their safes."

"Their money is the meanest thing heaven gives them. If I asked them for their health or their happiness, Lord God, what would they say?"

On the Sunday night following, John Storm preached to an overflowing congregation from the text, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

But a few weeks afterwards his face was bright and his voice was cheery, and he was writing another letter to Glory:—

"In full swing at last, Glory. To carry out my new idea, I had to get three thousand pounds more of my mother's money from my uncle. He gave it up cheerfully,

only saying he was curious to see what approach to the Christian ideal the situation of civilisation permitted. But Mrs. Callender is *dour*, and every time I spend sixpence of my own money on the Church she utters withering sarcasms about being only a 'daft auld woman hersel', and then I have to caress and coax her.

"The newspapers were facetious about my 'Baby Houses' until they scented the Prime Minister at the back of them, and now they call them the 'Storm Shelters,' and christen my nightly processions 'The White-cross Army.' Even the Archdeacon has begun to tell the world how he 'took an interest' in me from the first, and gave me my title. I met him again the other day at a rich woman's house, where we had only one little spar, and yesterday he wrote, urging me to 'organise my great effort,' and have a public dinner in honour of its inauguration. I did not think God's work could be well done by people dining in herds and drinking bottles of champagne, but I showed no malice. In fact, I agreed to hold a meeting in the lady's drawing-room, to which clergymen, and members of all denominations are being invited, for this is a cause that rises above all differences of dogma, and I intend to try what can be done towards a union of Christendom on a social basis. Mrs. Callender is *dour* on that subject too, reminding me that where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. The Archdeacon thinks we must have the meeting before the twelfth of August, or not until after the middle of September, and Mrs. Callender understands this to mean that 'the Holy Ghost always goes to sleep in the grouse season.'

"Meantime, my Girls' Club goes like a forest fire. We are in our renovated clergy-house at last, and have every-

thing comfortable. Two hundred members already, chiefly dressmakers and tailors, and girls out of the jam and match factories. The bright, merry young things, rejoicing in their brief blossoming time between girlhood and womanhood, I love to be among them and to look at their glistening eyes! Mrs. Callender blows withering blasts on this head also, saying it is no place for a 'laddie,' whereupon I lie low and think much, but say nothing.

"Our great night is Sunday night after service. Yes, indeed, Sunday! That's just when the devil's houses are all open round about us, and why should God's house be shut up? It is all very well for the people who have only one Sabbath in the week to keep it wholly holy—I have seven, being a follower of Jesus, not of Moses. But the rector of the parish has begun to complain of my 'intrusion,' and to tell the bishop I ought to be 'mended or ended.' It seems that my 'doings' are 'indecent and unnecessary,' and my sermons are 'a violation of all the sanctities, all the modesties of existence.' Poor dumb dog, teaching the Gospel of Don't! The world has never been reformed by 'resignation' to the evils of life, or converted by 'silence' either.

"How I wish you were here in the midst of it all! And—who knows?—perhaps you will be some day yet. Do not trouble to answer this—I will write again soon, and may then have something practical to say to you. *Au revoir!*"

XI.

ON the day of the drawing-room meeting, a large company gathered in the hall at Belgrave Square. Lady

Robert Ure, back from the honeymoon, received the guests for her mother, whose weak heart and a headache kept her upstairs. Her husband stood aside, chewing the end of his moustache and looking through his eyeglass with a gleam of amused interest in his glittering eye. There were many ladies, all fashionably dressed, and one of them wore a sea-gull's wing in her hat, with part of the root left visible, and painted red to show that it had been torn out of the living bird. The men were nearly all clergymen, and the cut of their cloth and the fashions of their ties indicated the various complexions of their creeds. They glanced at each other with looks of embarrassment, and Mrs. Callender, who came in like a breeze off a Scottish moor, said audibly that she had never seen "sae many craws on one tree before." The Archdeacon was there with his head up, talking loudly to Lady Robert. She stood motionless in her place, never turning her head towards John Storm, though it was plain that she was looking at him constantly. More than once he caught an expression of pain in her face, and felt pity for her as one of the brides who had acted the lie of marrying without love. But his spirits were high. He welcomed everybody, and even bantered Mrs. Callender when she told him she "objected to the hale thing," and said "Weel, weel, wait a wee."

The Archdeacon gave the signal and led the way with Lady Robert to the drawing-room, where Mrs. Macrae, redolent of perfume, was reclining on a sofa with the "lady poodle" by her side. As soon as the company were seated the Archdeacon rose and coughed loudly.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "we have no assurance of a blessing except 'Ask and ye shall receive.' Therefore, before we go further, it is our duty, as brethren

of a common family in Christ, to ask the blessing of Almighty God on this enterprise."

There was a subdued rustle of drooping hats and bonnets, when suddenly a thin voice was heard to say, "Mr. Archdeacon, may I inquire first who is to ask the blessing?"

"I thought of doing so myself," said the Archdeacon with a meek smile.

"In that case, as a Unitarian, I must object to an invocation in which I do not believe."

There was a half-suppressed titter from the wall at the back, where Lord Robert Ure was standing with his face screwed up to his eyeglass.

"Well, if the name of our Lord is a stumbling-block to our Unitarian brother, no doubt the prayer in this instance would be acceptable without the customary Christian benediction."

"That's just like you," said a large man near the door, with whiskers all round his face. "You've been trimming all your life, and now you are going to trim away the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"If our Low Church brother thinks he can do better . . ."

But John Storm intervened. He had looked icy cold, though the twitching of his lower lip showed that he was red hot within.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said in a quavering voice, "I apologise for bringing you together. I thought if we were in earnest about the union of Christendom we might at least unite in the real contest with evil. But I find it is a dream; we have only been trifling with ourselves, and there is not one of us who wants the union of Christendom, except on the condition that his rod shall be like

Aaron's rod which swallowed up all the rest. It was a mistake, and I beg your pardon."

"Yes, sir," said the Archdeacon, "it *was* a mistake; and if you had taken my advice from the first, and asked the blessing of God through good High Churchmen alone——"

"God doesn't wait for any asking," said John, now flushing up in the eyes. "He gives freely to High Churchmen, Low Churchmen, and No Churchmen alike."

"If that is your opinion, sir, you are no better than some of your friends, and, for my part, I will never darken your door again!"

"*Darken* is a good word for it, Archdeacon," said John, and with that the company broke up.

Mrs. Macrae looked like a thunder-cloud as John bowed to her on passing out, but Mrs. Callender cried in a jubilant voice, "Be skipper of your ain ship, laddie!" and added (being two yards behind the Archdeacon's broad back going down the stairs), "If some folks are to be inheritors of the kingdom of heaven there'll be a mighty crush at the pearly gates, I'm thinking!"

John Storm went back to Soho with a heavy heart. Going up Victoria Street he passed a crowd of ragged people who were ploughing their way through the carriages. Two constables were taking a man and a woman to the police court in Rochester Row. The prisoners were Sharkey, the keeper of the gambling-house, and his wife the baby-farmer.

But within a week John Storm, in greater spirits than ever, was writing to Glory again:—

"The Archdeacon has deserted me, but no matter! My uncle has advanced me another thousand of my

mother's money, so the crusade is *self*-supporting in one sense, at all events. What a fool I am! Ask Aunt Anna her opinion of me, or say old Chalse or the village natural. But never mind! Folly and wisdom are relative terms, and I don't envy the world its narrow ideas of either. You would be amused to see how the women of the West End are taking up the movement—Lady Robert Ure among the rest! They have banded themselves into a Sisterhood, and christened our clergy-house a 'Settlement.' One of my Greek owners came in the other evening to see the alterations. His eyes glistened at the change, and he asked leave to bring a friend. I trust you are well and settling things comfortably, and that Miss Macquarrie has gone. It is raining through a colander here, but I have no time to think of depressing weather. Sometimes when I cross our great squares, where the birds sing among the yellowing leaves, my mind goes off to your sweet home in the sunshine; and when I drop into the dark alleys and lanes, where the pale-faced children play in their poverty and rags, I think of a day that is coming, and, God willing, is now so near, when a ministering angel of tenderness and strength will be passing through them like a gleam. But I am more than ever sure that you do well to avoid for the present the pompous joys of life in London, where for one happy being there are a thousand pretenders to happiness."

On the Sunday night following, Crook Lane, outside the clergy-house, was almost blocked with noisy people of both sexes. They were a detachment of the 'Skeletons,' and the talk among them was of the trial of the Sharkeys, which had taken place the day before. "They've 'ed six months," said one. "And it's all along o' minjee parsons," said another; and Charlie Wilkes, who had a certain re-

putation for humour, did a step-dance and sang some doggerel beginning—

“Father Storm is a werry good man,
'E does you all the 'arm 'e can.”

Through this crowd two gentlemen pushed their way to the clergy-house, which was brilliantly lit up. One of them was the Greek owner, the other was Lord Robert Ure. Entering a large room on the ground floor, they first came upon John Storm, in cassock and biretta, standing at the door and shaking hands with everybody who came in and went out. He betrayed no surprise, but greeted them respectfully and then passed them on. Every moment of his time was occupied. The room was full of the young girls of the district, with here and there a Sister out of another world entirely. Some were reading, some conversing, some laughing, some playing a piano, and some singing. Their voices filled the air like the chirping of birds, and their faces were bright and happy. “Good-evening, Father,” they said on entering, and “Good-night, Father,” as they went away.

The two men stood some minutes and looked round the room. It was observed that Lord Robert did not remove his hat. He kept chewing the end of a broken cigarette, whereof the other end hung down his chin. One of the Sisters heard him say, “It will do with a little alteration, I think.” Then he went off alone, and the Greek owner stepped up to John Storm.

It was not at first that John could attend to him, and when he was able to do so he began to rattle on about his own affairs. “See,” he said with a delighted smile and a wave of the arm, “see how crowded we are! We'll have to think of taking in the next door soon.”

“Father Storm,” said the Greek, “I have something

serious to say, though the official notification will of course reach you by another channel."

John's face darkened as a ripe cornfield 'does when the sun dies away from it.

"I am sorry to tell you that the trustees, having had a favourable offer for this property——"

"Well?" His great staring eyes had stopped the man.

"—— have decided to sell."

"*Sell?* Did you say se . . . ? To whom? . . . What?"

"To tell you the truth, to the syndicate of a music-hall."

John staggered back, breathing audibly. "Now if a man had to believe that . . . Do you know, if I thought such a thing *could* happen——"

"I'm sorry you take the matter so seriously, Father Storm. It's true you've spent money on the property, but, believe me, the trustees will derive no profit——"

"Profit? Money? Do you suppose I'm thinking of that, and not of the desecration, the outrage, the horror? But who are they? Is that man . . . Lord——"

The Greek had nodded his head, and John flung open the door. "Out of this! Out of it, you Judas!" And almost before the Greek had crossed the threshold the door was banged at his back.

The incident had been observed, and there was dead silence in the club-room, but John only cried, "Let's sing something, girls," and when a Sister struck up his favourite "Nazareth" there was no voice so loud as his.

But he had realised everything. "Gloria" was coming back, and the work of months was overthrown!

When he was going home groups of the girls were talking in whispers in the hall, and Mrs. Pincher, who was wiping her eyes at the door, said, "I wonder you don't drown yourself, I do."

At the corner of the lane Mr. Jupe was waiting for him, to beg his pardon and to ask his advice. What he had said of Mrs. Jupe had turned out to be true. The Sharkeys had "split" on her, and she had been arrested. "It was all in the evenin' paipers last night," the weak creature whimpered, "and to-day my manager told me I 'ad best look out for another place. Oh, my poor Lidjer! What am I to do?"

"Do? Cut her off like a rotten bough!" said John scornfully, and with that he strode down the street. The human sea roared around him, and he felt as if he wanted to fling himself into the midst of it and be swallowed up.

On reaching Victoria Square he told Mrs. Callender the news—flung it out at her with a sort of triumphant shout. His church had been sold over his head, and being only "Chaplain to the Greek-Turks," he was to be turned into the streets. Then he laughed wildly, and by some devilish impulse began to abuse Glory. "The next chaplain is to be a girl," he cried, "one of those creatures who throw kisses at gaping crowds, and sweep curtsies for their dirty crusts."

But all at once he turned white as a ghost and sat down trembling. Mrs. Callender's face was twitching, and to prevent herself from crying she burst into scorching satire. "There!" she said, sitting in her rocking-chair and rocking herself furiously, "I ken'd weel what it would come til! Adversity mak's a man wise, they say, if it doesna mak' him rich. But it's the Prime Minister I blame for this. The auld dolt! he must be fallen to his dotage. It's enough to mak' a reasonable body go out of her mind to think of sic wise asses. I told you what to expect, but you were always miscalling me for a suspicious auld woman. Oh, it's a thing ye'd no suspect; but Jane Cal-

lender is only a daft auld fool, ye see, and doesna ken what she's saying!"

But the next moment she had jumped up and flung her arms about John's neck, and was crying over him like a girl. "Oh, my son! my ain son! And is it for me to fling out at ye? Aye, aye, it's a heartless world, laddie!"

He kissed the old woman, and then she tried to coax him to eat. "Come, come, a wee bittie, just a wee bittie. We must eat our supper, anyway."

"God seems dead, and heaven a long way off," he murmured.

"And a drap o' whisky will do no harm—a wee drappie."

"There's only one thing clear—God sees I'm unfit for the work, so He has taken it away from me."

She turned aside from the table, and the supper was left untouched.

The first post next morning brought a letter from Glory.

THE GARDEN HOUSE,
CLEMENT'S INN, W.C.

Forgive me! I have returned to town! I couldn't help it, I couldn't, I couldn't. London dragged me back. What was I to do after everything was settled and the aunties provided for?—assist in a dame's school, and wage war with pothooks and hangers? Oh! I was simply dying of weariness—dying, dying, dying!

And then they made me such tempting offers. Not the music-hall—don't think that. I daresay you were quite right there. No, but the theatre, the regular theatre! Mr. Drake has bought some broken-down old place, and is to turn it into a beautiful theatre expressly for me. I

am to play Juliet. Only think—Juliet!—and in my own theatre! Already I feel like a liberated slave who has crossed her Red Sea.

And don't think a woman's mourning is like the silly old laws which lasted but three days. *He* is buried in my heart, not in the earth, and I shall love him and revere him always! And then didn't you tell me yourself it wouldn't be right to allow his death to stop my life?

Write and say you forgive me, John. Reply by return, and make yourself your own postman—registered. You'll find me here at Rosa's. Come, come, come! I'll never forgive you if you don't come soon—never, never!

GLORY.

XII.

A FORTNIGHT had passed, and John Storm had not yet visited Glory. Nevertheless he had heard of her from day to day through the medium of the newspapers. Every morning he had glanced down the black columns for the name that stood out from them as if its letters had been printed in blood. The reports had been many and mysterious. First, the brilliant young artiste, who had made such an extraordinary impression some months before, had returned to London and would shortly resume the promising career which had been interrupted by illness and family bereavement. Next, the forthcoming appearance would be on the regular stage, and in a Shakespearean character which was always understood to be a crucial test of histrionic genius. Then, the revival of "Romeo and Juliet," which had formerly been in contemplation, would probably give way to the still more ambitious project of an entirely new production by a well-known Scandinavian author, with a part peculiarly fitted

to the personality and talents of the débutante. Finally, a syndicate was about to be formed for the purchase of some old property, with a view to its reconstruction as a theatre, in the interest of the new play and the new player.

John Storm laughed bitterly. He told himself that Glory was unworthy of the least of his thoughts. It was his duty to go on with his work and think of her no more.

He had received his official notice to quit. The church was to be given up in a month, the clergy-house in two months, and he believed himself to be immersed in preparations for the rehousing of the club and home. Twenty young mothers and their children now lived in the upper rooms, under obedience to the Sisterhood, but Polly's boy had remained with Mrs. Pincher. From time to time he had seen the little one tethered to a chair by a scarf about its waist, creeping by the wall to the door, and there gazing out on the world with looks of intelligence, and babbling to it in various inarticulate noises. "Boo-loo! Lal-la! Mum-um!" The little dark face had the eyes of its mother, but it represented Glory for all that. John Storm loved to see it. He felt that he could never part with it, and that if Lord Robert Ure himself came and asked for it he would bundle him out of doors.

But a carriage drew up at Mrs. Callender's one morning, and Lady Robert Ure stepped out. Her pale and patient face had the feeble and nervous smile of the humiliated and unloved.

"Mr. Storm," she said in her gentle voice, "I have come on a delicate errand. I cannot delay any longer a duty I ought to have discharged before."

It was about Polly's baby. She had heard of what had happened at the hospital, and the newspapers which had followed her to Paris, with reports of her wedding,

had contained reports of the girl's death also. Since her return she had inquired about the child, and discovered that it had been rescued by him and was now in careful keeping.

"But it is for me to look after it, Mr. Storm, and I beg of you to give it up to me. Something tells me that God will never give me children of my own, so I shall be doing no harm to anyone, and my husband need never know whose child it is I adopt. I promise you to be good to it. It shall never leave me. And if it should live to be a man, and grow to love me, that will help me to forget the past and to forgive myself for my own share in it. Oh, it is little I can do for the poor girl who is gone—for after all, she loved him, and I took him from her. But this is my duty, Mr. Storm, and I cannot sleep at night or rest in the day until it is begun."

"I don't know if it is your duty, dear lady, but if you wish for the child it is your right," said John Storm, and they got into the carriage and drove to Soho.

"Boo-loo! Lal-la! Mum-um!" The child was tethered to the chair as usual and talking to the world according to its wont. When it was gone, and the women on the doorsteps could see no more of the fine carriage of the great lady who had brought the odour of perfume and the rustle of silk into the dingy court, and Mrs. Pincher had turned back to the house with red eyes and her widow's cap awry, John Storm told himself that everything was for the best. The last link with Glory was broken! Thank God for that! He might go on with his work now and need think of her no more!

That day he called at Clement's Inn.

The Garden House was a pleasant dwelling, fronting on two of its sides to the garden of the ancient Inn of

Chancery, and cosily furnished with many curtains and rugs. The cockney maid who answered the door was familiar in a moment, and during the short passage from the hall to the floor above she communicated many things. Her name was Liza; she had heard him preach; he had made her cry; "Miss Gloria" had known her former mistress, and Mr. Drake had got her the present place.

There was a sound of laughter from the drawing-room. It was Glory's voice. When the door opened she was standing in the middle of the floor in a black dress and with a pale face, but her eyes were bright and she was laughing merrily. She stopped when John Storm entered and looked confused and ashamed. Drake, who was lounging on the couch, rose and bowed to him, and Miss Macquarrie, who was correcting long slips of printer's proofs at a desk by the window, came forward and welcomed him. Glory held his hand with her long hand-clasp and looked steadfastly into his eyes. His face twitched and her own blushed deeply, and then she talked in a nervous and jerky way, reproaching him for his neglect of her.

"I have been busy," he began, and then stopped with a sense of hypocrisy. "I mean worried and tormented," and then stopped again, for Drake had dropped his head.

She laughed, though there was nothing to laugh at, and proposed tea, rattling along in broken sentences that were spoken with a tremulous trill, which had a suggestion of tears behind it. "Shall I ring for tea, Rosa? Oh, you *have* rung for tea! Ah, here it comes! Thank you, Liza. Set it here," seating herself. "Now who says 'the girl'? Remember?" and then more laughter.

At that moment there was another arrival. It was Lord Robert Ure. He kissed Rosa's hand, smiled on

Glory, saluted Drake familiarly, and then settled himself on a low stool by the tea-table, pulled up the knees of his trousers, relaxed the congested muscles of one-half of his face and let fall his eyeglass.

Drake was handing out the cups as Glory filled them. He was looking at her attentively, vexed at the change in her manner since John Storm entered. When he returned to his seat on the sofa he began to twitch the ear of her pug, which lay coiled up asleep beside him, calling it an ugly little pestilence, and wondering why she carried it about with her. Glory protested that it was an angel of a dog, whereupon he supposed it was now dreaming of paradise—listen!—and then there were audible snores in the silence, and everybody laughed, and Glory screamed.

"I declare on my honour, my dear," said Drake, with a mischievous look at John, "the creature is uglier than the beast that did the business on the day we eloped."

"Eloped!" cried Rosa and Lord Robert together.

"Why, did you never hear that Glory eloped with me?"

Glory was trying to drown his voice with hollow laughter.

"She was seven and I was six and a half, and she had proposed to me in the orchard the day before!"

"Anybody have more tea? No? Some sally-lunn, perhaps?" and then more laughter.

"Hold your tongue, Glory! Nobody wants your tea! Let us hear the story," said Rosa.

"Why, yes, certainly," said Lord Robert, and everybody laughed again.

"She was all for travel and triumphal processions in those days——"

Glory stopped her ears and began to sing—

“ ‘Willy, Willy Wilkin,
Kissed the maid a-milkin
Fa, la, la!’ ”

“There were so many things people could do if they wouldn’t waste so much time working——

‘Willy, Willy Wilkin,
Kissed the maid——’ ”

“Glory, if you don’t be quiet we’ll turn you out!” and Rosa got up and flourished her proofs.

“I had brought my dog, and when I called her a——”

But Glory had leapt to her feet and fled from the room. Drake had leapt up also, and now, putting his back against the door, he raised his voice and went on with his story.

“Somebody saved us, though, and she lay in his arms and kissed him all the way home again.”

Glory was strumming on the door and singing to drown his voice. When the story was ended and she was allowed to come back, she was panting and gasping with laughter, but there were tears in her eyes for all that, and Lord Robert was saying, with a sidelong look towards John Storm, “Really, this ought to be a scene in the new ‘Sigurdson,’ don’t you know!”

John had retired within himself during this nonsense. He had been feeling an intense hatred of the two men, and was looking as gloomy as deep water. “All acting, sheer acting,” he thought, and then he told himself that Glory was only worthy of his contempt. What could attract her in the society of such men? Only their wealth and their social station. Their intellectual and moral atmosphere must weary and revolt her.

Rosa had to go to her newspaper office, and Drake saw her to the door. John rose at the same time, and

Glory said, "Going already?" but she did not try to detain him. She would see him again; she had much to say to him. "I suppose you were surprised to hear that I had returned to London?" she said, looking up at his knitted brows.

He did not answer immediately, and Lord Robert, who was leaning against the chimney-piece, said in his cold drawl, "Your friend ought to be happy that you have returned to London, seems to me, my dear, instead of wasting your life in that wilderness."

John drew himself up. "It's not London I object to," he said; "that was inevitable, I daresay."

"What then?"

"The profession she has come back to follow."

"Why, what's amiss with the profession?" said Lord Robert, and Drake, who returned to the room at the moment, said, "Yes, what's amiss with it? Some of the best men in the world have belonged to it, I think."

"Tell me the name of one of them, since the world began, who ever lived an active Christian life?"

Lord Robert made a kink of laughter, and turning to the window began to play a tune with his finger-tips on the glass of a pane. Drake struggled to keep a straight face, and answered, "It is not their *rôle*, sir."

"Very well, if that's too much to ask, tell me how many of them have done anything in real life, anything for the world, for humanity—anything whatever, I don't care what it is."

"You are unreasonable, sir," said Drake, "and such objections could as properly apply to the professions of the painter and the musician. These are the children of joy. Their first function is to amuse. And surely amusement has its place in real life, as you say?"

"On the contrary," said John, following his own thought, for he had not listened, "how many of them have lived lives of reckless abandonment, self-indulgence, and even scandalous licence?"

"Those are abuses that apply equally to other professions, sir. Even the Church is not free from them. But in the view of reasonable beings, one clergyman of evil life—nay, one hundred, would not make the profession of the clergy bad."

"A profession," said John, "which appeals above all to the senses and lives on the emotions, and fosters jealousy and vanity and backbiting, and develops duplicity and exists on lies, and does nothing to encourage self-sacrifice or to help suffering humanity, is a bad profession and a sinful one!"

"If a profession is sinful," said Drake, "in proportion as it appeals to the senses, and lives on the emotions, and develops duplicity, then the profession of the Church is the most sinful in the world, for it offers the greatest temptations to lying, and produces the worst hypocrites and impostors!"

"That," said John, with eyes flashing and passion vibrating in his voice, "that, sir, is the great Liar's everlasting lie—and you know it!"

Glory was between them with uplifted hands. "Peace, peace! Blessed is the peacemaker! But tea! Will nobody take more tea? Oh, dear! oh dear! Why can't we have tea over again?"

"I know what you mean, sir," said Drake. "You mean that I have brought Glory back to a life of danger and vanity, and sloth and sensuality. Very well. I deny your definition. But call it what you will, I have brought

her back to the only life her talents are fit for, and if that's all——”

“Would you have done the same for your own sister?”

“How dare you introduce my sister's name in this connection?”

“And how dare you resent it? What's good for one woman is good for another.”

Glory was turning aside, and Drake was looking ashamed. “Of course . . . naturally . . . all I meant,” he faltered . . . “if a girl has to earn her living, whatever her talents, her genius . . . that is one thing. But the upper classes, I mean, the leisured classes——”

“Damn the leisured classes, sir!” said John, and in the silence that followed the men looked round, but Glory was gone from the room.

Lord Robert, who had been whistling at the window, said to Drake in a cynical undertone, “The man is hipped and sore. He has lost his challenge, and we ought to make allowances for him, don't you know.”

Drake tried to laugh. “I'm willing to make allowances,” he said lightly; “but when a man talks to me as if . . . as if I meant to . . .” but the light tone broke down, and he faced round upon John and burst out passionately, “What right have you to talk to me like this? What is there in my character, in my life, that justifies it? What woman's honour have I betrayed? What have I done that is unworthy of the character of an English gentleman?”

John took a stride forward, and came face to face and eye to eye with him. “What have you done?” he said. “You have used a woman as your decoy to win your challenge, as you say, and you have struck me in the face with the hand of the woman I love. That's

what you've done, sir, and if it's worthy of the character of an English gentleman, then God help England!"

Drake put his hand to his head and his flushed face turned pale. But Lord Robert Ure stepped forward and said with a smile, "Well, and if you've lost your church, so much the better. You are only an outsider in the ecclesiastical stud anyway. Who wants you? Your rector doesn't want you; your bishop doesn't want you. Nobody wants you, if you ask me."

"I don't ask you, Lord Robert," said John. "But there's somebody who does want me for all that. Shall I tell you who it is? It's the poor and helpless girl who has been deceived by the base and selfish man, and then left to fight the battle of life alone, or to die by suicide, and go shuddering down to hell! That's who wants me, and, God willing, I mean to stand by her."

"Damme, sir, if you mean *me*, let me tell you what *you* are," said Lord Robert, screwing up his eyeglass. "You"—shaking his head right and left—"you are a man who takes delicately-nurtured ladies out of sheltered homes and sends them into holes and hovels in search of abandoned women and their misbegotten children! Why"—turning to Drake—"what do you think has happened? My wife has fallen under this gentleman's influence—the poor simpleton!—and not an hour before I left my house she brought home a child which he had given her to adopt. Think of it!—out of the shambles of Soho, and God knows whose brat and bastard!"

The words were hardly out of his mouth when John Storm had taken him by both shoulders. "God *does* know," he said, "and so do I. Shall I tell you whose child that is? Shall I? It's yours." The man saw it coming and turned white as a ghost. "Yours! and your

wife has taken up the burden of your sin and shame, for she's a good woman, and you are not fit to live on the earth she walks upon!"

He left the two men speechless, and went heavily down the stairs. Glory was waiting for him at the door. Her eyes were glistening after recent tears.

"You will come no more?" she said. She could read him like a book. "I can see that you intend to come no more."

He did not deny it, and after a moment she opened the door, and he passed out with a look of utter weariness. Then she went back to her room and flung herself on the bed face downwards.

The men in the drawing-room were beginning to recover themselves. Lord Robert was humming a tune, Drake pacing to and fro.

"Buying up his church to make a theatre for Glory was the very refinement of cruelty!" said Drake. "Good heavens! what possessed me?"

"Original sin, dear boy!" said Lord Robert, with a curl of the lip.

"Original? A bad plagiarism, you mean!"

"Very well. If *I* helped you to do it, shall I help you to give it up? Withdraw the prospectus and return the deposits on shares, the dear Archdeacon's among the rest."

Drake took up his hat and left the house. Lord Robert followed him presently. Then the drawing-room was empty, and the hollow sound of sobbing came down to it from the bedroom above.

Father Storm read prayers in the church that night with a hard and absent heart. A terrible impulse of

hate had 'taken hold of him. He hated Drake, he hated Glory, he hated himself most of all, and felt as if seven devils had taken possession of him, and he was a hypocrite, and might fall dead at the altar.

"But what a fate the Almighty has saved me from!" he thought. Glory would have been a drag on his work for life. He must forget her. She was only worthy of his contempt. Yet he could not help but remember how beautiful she had looked in her mourning dress, with that pure pale face and its signs of suffering! Or how charming she had seemed to him even in the midst of all that deception! Or how she had held him as by a spell!

Going home, he came upon a group of men in the Court. One of them planted himself full in front, and said with an insolent swagger, "Me and my mytes thinks there's too many parsons abart 'ere. What do you think, sir?"

"I think there are more gamblers and thieves, my lad," he answered, and at the next instant the man had struck him in the face. He closed with the ruffian, grappled him by the throat, and flung him on his back. One moment he held him there, writhing and gasping, then he said, "Get up and get off, and let me see no more of you."

"No, sir, not this time," said a voice above his back. The crowd had melted away, and a policeman stood beside them. "I've been waiting for this one for weeks, Father," he said, and he marched the man to jail.

It was Charlie Wilkes. At the trial of Mrs. Jupe that morning, Aggie, being a witness, had been required to mention his name. It was all in the evening papers, and he had been dismissed from his time-keeping at the foundry.

XIII.

A WEEK passed. Breakfast was over at Victoria Square, and John Storm was glancing at the pages of a weekly paper. "Listen!" he cried, and then read aloud in a light tone of mock bravery, which broke down at length into a husky gurgle—

"The sympathy which has lately been evoked by the announcement that a proprietary church in Soho has been sold for secular uses is creditable to public sentiment——'"

"Think of that, now!" interrupted Mrs. Callender.

"——and no doubt the whole community will agree to hope that Father Storm will recover from the irritation natural to his eviction——'"

"Aye, we can all get over another body's disappointment, laddie."

"But there is a danger that in this instance the altruism of the time may develop a sentimentality not entirely good for public morals——'"

"When the ox is down, there are lots of butchers, ye ken!"

"With the uses to which the fabric is to be converted it is no part of our purpose to deal, further than to warn the public not to lend an ear to the all too prurient purity of the amateur moralist; but considering the character of the work now carried on in Soho, no doubt with the best intentions——'"

"Aye, aye, it's easy to steal the goose and give the giblets in alms."

"——it behoves us to consider if the community is not to be congratulated on its speedy and effectual ending. Father Storm is a young man of some talents and social position, but without any special experience or

knowledge of the world; in fact, a weak, over-sanguine, and rather foolish fanatic——’”

“Oh, aye, he’s down; down with him!”

“——and therefore it is monstrous that he should be allowed to subvert the order of social life or disturb the broad grounds of the reasonable and the practical——’”

“Never mind. High winds only blaw on high hills, laddie!”

“——As for the “fallen sister” whom he has taken under his special care, we confess to a feeling that too much sympathy has been wasted on her already. Her feet take hold of hell, her house is the way of the grave, going down to the chamber of death——”

Mrs. Callender leapt to her feet. “That’s the ’deacon-man; I ken the cloven hoof!”

John Storm had flung the paper away. “What a cowardly world it is!” he said. “But God wins in the end, and by God he shall!”

“Tut, man, don’t tak’ on like that. You can’t climb the Alps on roller-skates, you see! But as for the Arch-deacon, pooh! I’m no windy aboot your ‘Sisters’ and ‘Settlements’ and sic like, but if there had been Society papers in the Lord’s time, Simon the Pharisee would have been a namby-pamby critic compared to some of them.”

A moment afterwards she was looking out of the window and holding up both hands. “My gracious! It’s himsel’! It’s the Prime Minister!”

A gaunt old gentleman with a meagre moustache, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and unfashionable black clothes, was stepping up to the door.

“Yes, it’s my uncle,” said John, and the old lady fled out of the room to change her cap.

"I have heard what has happened, John, so I have come to see you," said the Prime Minister.

Was he thinking of the money? John felt uneasy and ashamed.

"I'm sorry, my boy, very sorry!"

"Thank you, uncle."

"But it all comes, you see, of the ridiculous idea that we are a Christian nation! Such a thing couldn't have occurred at the shrine of a pagan god!"

"It was only a proprietary church, uncle. I was much to blame."

"I do not deny that you have acted unwisely, but what difference does that make, my boy? To sell a church seems like the climax of irreverence; but they are doing as bad every day. If you want to see what times the Church has fallen on, look at the advertisements in your religious papers—your *Benefice* and *Church Patronage Gazettes*, and so forth. A traffic, John, a slave traffic, worse than anything in Africa, where they sell bodies, not souls!"

"It is a crime which cries to the avenging anger of heaven," said John, "but it is the Establishment that is to blame, not the Church, uncle."

"We are a nation of money-lenders, my boy, and the Church is the worst usurer of them all, with its learned divines in scarlet hoods who hold shares in music-halls, and its Fathers in God living at ease and leasing out public-houses. *You* have been lending money on usury too, and on a bad security. What are you going to do now?"

"Go on with my work, uncle, and do two hours where I did one before."

"And get yourself kicked where you got yourself kicked before!"

"Why not? If God puts ten pounds on a man, He gives him strength to bear twenty."

"John, John, I am feeling rather sore, and I can't bear much more of it. I'm growing old, and my life is rather lonely too. Except your father, you are my only kinsman now, and it seems as if our old family must die with you. But come, my boy, come, throw up all this sorry masquerade. Isn't there a woman in the world who can help me to persuade you? I don't care who she is, or what, or where she comes from."

John had coloured to the eyes, and was stammering something about the true priest cut off from earthly marriage, therefore free to commit himself completely to his work, when Mrs. Callender came back, spruce and smart, with many smiles and curtsies. The Prime Minister greeted her with the same old-fashioned courtesy, and they cooed away like two old doves, until a splendid equipage drove up to the door, and the plain old gentleman drove away in it.

"Wasn't he nice with me, wasn't he now?" the old lady kept saying, and John being silent—"Tut! you young men are just puir loblollyboys with a leddy when the auld ones come."

Going to Soho that day John Storm felt a sudden thrill at seeing on the street in front of him, walking in the same direction, an elderly figure in cassock and cord. It was the Father Superior of the Brotherhood. John overtook him and greeted him.

"Ah, I was on my way to see you, my son."

"Then you have heard what has happened?"

"Yes, Satan's shafts fly fast." Then taking John's arm as they walked, "Earthly blows are but reminders of Him, my son, like the hair-shirt of the monk, and this

trouble of yours is God's reminder of your broken obedience. What did I tell you when you left us—that you would come back within a year? And you will! Leave the world, my son. It treats you badly. The human spirit reigns over it, and even the Church is a Christian society out of the sphere and guidance of the Divine Spirit. Leave it and return to your unfinished vows.”

John shook his head, and took the Father into the clergy-house, where the girls were gathering for the evening. “How can I leave the world, Father, when there's work like this to do? Society presents to a large proportion of these bright creatures the alternative, ‘Sell yourself or starve.’ But God says, ‘Live, work, and love.’ Therefore society is doomed, and that dead man's sepulchre, the Establishment, is doomed, but the Church will live, and become the corner-stone of the new order, and stand between woman and the world, as it stood of old between the poor and the rich.”

The Father preached for John that night, taking for his text, “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” And on parting from him at the door of the sacristy he said, “Religious work can only be good, my son, if it concerns itself first of all with the salvation of souls. Now what if it pleased God to remove you from all this—to call you to a work of intercession—say to the mission-field?”

John's face turned pale. “There can be no need to fly,” he said with a frightened look. “Surely London is a mission-field wide enough for any man.”

“Yet, who knows? Perhaps for your own soul's sake, lest vanity should take hold of you, or the love of fame, or—or any of the snares of Satan! But good-bye, and God be with you!”

When John Storm reached home he found a letter awaiting him. It was from Glory.

"Are you dead and buried? If so, send me word, that I may compose your epitaph. 'Here lies' . . . *Lies* is good, for though you didn't promise to come back you ought to have done so, therefore it comes to the same thing in the end. You must not think too ill of Mr. Drake. I call him the milk of human kindness, and his friend Lord Robert the oil thereof—I mean the oil of vitriol. But his temper is like the Caspian Sea, having neither ebb nor flow, while yours is like the Bay of Biscay—Oh! so I can't expect you to agree. As for poor me, I may be guilty of all the seven deadly sins, but I can't see why I should be boycotted on that account. There is something I didn't know when you were here, and I want to explain about it. Therefore come 'right away' (Lord Bob Americanised). Being slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, I will forgive you if you come soon. If you don't, I'll—I'll go on the bike—feminine equivalent to the drink. To tell you the truth, I've done so already, having been careering round the gardens of the Inn during the early hours of morning, clad in Rosa's 'bloomers,' in which I make a picture and a sensation at the same time, she being several sizes larger round the hips, and fearfully and wonderfully made. If that doesn't fetch you, I'll go in for boxing next, and in a pair of four-ounce gloves I'll cut a *striking* figure, I can tell you.

"But, John Storm, have you cast me off entirely? Do you intend to abandon me? Do you think there is no salvation left for me? And are you going to let me sink in all this mire without stretching out a hand to help me? Oh dear! oh dear! I don't know what has come over the silly old world since I came back to London. Think it

must be teething, judging by the sharpness of its bite, and feel as if I should like to give it a dose of syrup of squills."

As John read the letter his eyelids quivered and his mouth relaxed. Then he glanced at it again and his face clouded.

"I cannot leave her entirely to the mercy of men like these," he thought.

This innocent daring, this babe-like ripping up of serviceable conventions—God knows what advantage such men might take of it. He must see her once again, to counsel her. It was his duty—he must not shrink from it.

It had been a day of painful impressions to Glory. Early in the morning Lord Robert had called to take her to the "reading" of the new play. It took place in the saloon of an unoccupied Strand theatre, of which the stage also had been engaged for rehearsal. The company were gathered there, and being more or less experienced actors and actresses, they received her with looks of courteous indulgence, as one whose leading place must be due to other things than talent. This stung her; she felt her position to be a false one, and was vexed that she had permitted Lord Robert to call for her. But humiliation had yet hardly begun.

While they stood waiting for the manager, who was late, a gorgeous person with a waxed moustache and in a fur-lined coat, redolent of the mixed odour of perfume and stale tobacco, forced his way up to her and offered his card. She knew the man in a moment.

"I'm Josephs," he said in a confidential undertone, "and if there's anything I can do for you—acting management—anything—it vill give me pleasure."

Glory flushed up and said, "But you don't seem to remember, sir, that we have met before."

The man smiled blandly. "Oh, yes. I've kept track of you ever since, and knew all about you. You hadn't made your appearance then, and naturally I couldn't do much. But now — *now* if you will give me de pleasure——"

"Then an agent is one who can do nothing for you when you want help, but when you don't want it——"

The man laughed to carry off his audacity. "Vell, you know vhat they say of us—agent from *agere*, 'to do,' and we're always 'doing.' Ha, ha! But if you are villing to let bygones be bygones, I am, and velcome."

Glory's face was crimson. "Will somebody go for the stage doorkeeper?" she said, and one of the company went out on that errand. Then raising her voice, so that everybody listened, she said, "Mr. Josephs, when I was quite unknown, and trying to get on, and finding it very hard, as we all do, you played me the cruellest trick a man ever played on a woman. I don't owe you any grudge, but for the sake of every poor girl who is struggling to live in London, I am going to turn you out of the house."

"Eh? Vhat?"

The stage doorkeeper had entered. "Porter, do you see this gentleman? He is never to come into this theatre again as long as we are here, and if he tries to force his way in, you are to call a policeman and have him bundled back into the street!"

"Daddle do," and the waxed moustache over the grinning mouth seemed to cut the face across.

When Josephs had gone, Glory could see that the looks of indulgence on the faces of the company had

gone also. "She'll do!" said one. "She's got the stuff in her!" said another; but Glory herself was now quaking with fear, and her troubles were not yet ended.

A little stout gentleman entered hurriedly with a roll of papers in his hand. He stepped up to Lord Robert, apologised for being late, and mopped his bald crown and red face. It was Sefton.

"This is to be our manager," said Lord Robert, and Mr. Sefton bobbed his head, winked with both eyes, and said, "Charmed, I'm sure, charmed!"

Glory could have sunk into the earth for shame, but in a moment she had realised the crushing truth that when a woman has been insulted in the deepest place—in her honour—the best she can do is to say nothing about it.

The company seated themselves around the saloon and the reading began. First came the list of characters, with the names of the cast. Glory's name and character came last, and her nerves throbbed with sudden pain when the manager read, "and *Gloria*—Miss Glory Quayle."

There was a confused murmur, and then the company composed themselves to listen. It was Gloria's play. She was rather scandalous. After the first act Glory thought it was going to be the story of Nell Gwynne in modern life; after the second, of Lady Hamilton; and after the third, in which the woman wrecks and ruins the first man in the country, she knew it was only another version of the "Harlot's Progress," and must end as that had ended.

The actors were watching their own parts, and pointing and punctuating with significant looks the places where the chances came, but Glory was overwhelmed with confusion. How was she to play this evil woman? The poison went to the bone, and to get into the skin of

such a creature a good woman would have to dispossess herself of her very soul. The reading ended, every member of the company congratulated some other member on the other's opportunities, and Sefton came up to Glory to ask if she did not find the play strong and the part magnificent.

"Yes," she said; "but only a bad woman could play that part properly."

"*You'll* do it, my dear, you'll do it on your own!" he answered gaily, and she went home perplexed, depressed, beaten down, and ashamed.

A newspaper had been left at the door. It was a second-rate theatrical journal, still damp from the press. The handwriting on the wrapper was that of Josephs, and there was a paragraph marked in blue pencil. It pretended to be a record of her short career, and everything was in it—the programme selling, the dressing, the foreign clubs—all the refuse of her former existence, set in a sinister light, and leaving the impression of an abject upbringing, as of one who had been *in* the streets if not on them.

Well, she had chosen her life, and must take it at its own price. But oh, the cruelty of the world to a woman, when her very success could be her shame! She felt that the past had gripped her again—the pitiless past—she could never drag herself out of the mire.

That night she wrote to John Storm, and next morning before Rosa had risen—her duties kept her up late—she heard a voice downstairs. Her dog also heard it, and began to bark. At the next moment John was in the room, and she was laughing up into his splendid black eyes, for he had caught her down at the sofa holding the pug's nose and trying to listen.

"Is it you? It's so good of you to come early. But this dog"—breaking into the Manx dialect—"she's ter'ble, just ter'ble!" Then rising and looking serious, "I wished to tell you that I knew nothing about the church, nothing whatever. If I'd had the least idea . . . But they told me nothing—it was very wrong—nothing. And the first thing I knew was when I saw it in all the newspapers."

He was leaning on the end of the mantelpiece. "If they deceived you like that, how can you go on with them?"

"You mean" (she was leaning on the other end, and speaking falteringly)—"you mean that I ought to give it all up. But it's too late for that now. It was too late when I came to know. Besides, it would do no good; you would be in the same position still, and as for me—well, somebody else would have the theatre, so where's the use?"

"I was thinking of the future, Glory, not the past. People who deceive us once are capable of doing so again."

"True—that's true—only—only——"

She was breaking down, and he turned his eyes away from her, saying, "Well, it's all over now, and there's no help for it."

"No, there's no help for it."

He tried to think what he had come to say, but do what he would he could not remember. The moment he looked at her the thread of his thoughts was lost, and the fragrance of her presence, so sweet, so close, made him feel as if he wanted to touch her. There was an awkward silence, and then he fidgeted with his hat and moved.

"Are you going so soon?"

"I'm busy, and——"

"Yes, you must be busy now."

"And then why . . . Why should we prolong a painful interview, Glory?"

She shot up a look under her eyebrows. His eyes had a harassed expression, but there was a gleam in them that set her heart beating.

"Is it so painful? Is it?"

"Glory, I meant to tell you I could not come again."

"No! You're not so busy as all that, are you? Surely" (the Manx again, only she seemed to be breathless now), "surely you're not so ter'ble busy but you can just put a sight on a girl now and again, for all?"

He made a gesture with his hand. "It disturbs—it distracts——"

"Oh, is that all? Then," with a forced laugh, "I'll come to see you instead. Yes, I will, though."

"No, you mustn't do that, Glory. It would only torment——"

"Torment! Gough bless me! Why torment?" and a fugitive flame shot up at him.

"Because," he stammered, and she could see that his lips quivered; then calmly, very calmly, pronouncing the words slowly, and in a voice as cold as ice, "because I love you!"

"You!"

"Didn't you know that?" His voice was guttural. "Haven't you known it all along? What's the use of pretending? You've dragged it out of me. Was that only to show your power over me?"

"Oh!"

She had heard what her heart wanted to hear, and not for worlds would she have missed hearing it, yet she was afraid, and trembling all over.

"We two are of different natures, Glory, that's the trouble between us—now, and always has been. We have nothing in common—absolutely nothing. You have chosen your path in life, and it is not my path. I have chosen mine, and it is not yours. Your friends are not my friends. We are two different beings altogether, and yet—and yet I love you! And that's why I cannot come again."

It was sweet, but it was terrible. So different from what she had dreamt of: "I love you!—you are my soul!—I cannot live without you." Yet he was right. She had slain his love before it was born to her—it was born dead. In an unsteady voice, which had suddenly become husky, she said—

"No doubt you are right. I must leave you to judge. Perhaps you have thought it all out."

"Don't suppose it will be easy for me, Glory. I've suffered a good deal, and I daresay I shall suffer more yet. If so, I'll bear it. But for the sake of my work——"

"Ah! . . . But of course I can't expect . . . Naturally you love your work also——"

"I *do* love my work also, and therefore it's no use trifling. 'If thine eye offend——'"

She was stung. "Well, since there's no help for it, I suppose we must shake hands and part."

Not until then—not until he had pronounced his doom and she had accepted it did he realise how beautiful she seemed to him. He felt as if something in his throat wanted to cry out.

"It isn't what I expected, Glory—what I dreamt of for years."

"But it's best—it seems best."

"I tried to make a place for you too, but you wouldn't have it—you let it go; you preferred this other lot in life."

She remembered Josephs, and Sefton, and the newspaper, and the part, and she covered her face with her hands.

"How can I go on, Glory, to the peril of my . . . It's dangerous, even dangerous."

"Yes, you are a clergyman and I am an actress. You must think of that. People are so ignorant, so cruel, and I daresay they are talking already."

"Do you think I should care for that, Glory?" Her hands came down from her face. "Do you think I should care one jot if all the miserable scandal-mongering world thought——"

"You'll think the best of me, then?"

"I'll think of both of us as we used to be, my child, before the world came between us, before you——"

She was fighting against an impulse to fling herself into his arms, but she only said in a soft voice, "You are quite right, quite justified. I have chosen my lot in life, and must make the best of it."

"Well . . ." He was holding out his hand.

But nevertheless she put her hand behind her, thinking, "No; if I shake hands with him it will be the end of everything."

"Good-bye!" and with an expression of utter despair he left her.

She did not cry, and when Rosa came down immediately afterwards she was smiling and her eyes were very bright.

"Was that your friend Mr. Storm? Yes? You must beware of him, my dear. He would stop your career and think he was doing God's service."

"There's no danger of that, Rosa. He only came to say he would come no more," and then something flashed in her eyes and died away, and then flashed again.

"Yes," thought Rosa, "there's an extraordinary attraction about her that makes all other women seem tame." And then Rosa remembered somebody else and sighed.

John Storm went back to Soho by way of Clare Market, and when people saluted him in the streets with "Good-morning, Father," he did not answer because he did not see them. On going to church that night, he came upon a group of Charlie's cronies betting six to one against his getting off, and a girl in gay clothes was waiting to speak to him. It was Aggie. She had come to plead for Charlie.

"It's the drink, sir. 'E's a good boy when 'e's not drinking. But I ask pardon for 'im; and if you would only not prosecute——"

John was ashamed of himself at sight of the girl's fidelity to her unworthy lover.

"And you, my child—what about you?"

"Oh, I'm all right. What's broken can't be mended."

And meanwhile the church-bells were ringing, and the cabs were running to the theatres.

XIV.

THE rehearsals began early in the morning and usually lasted until late in the afternoon. Glory found them wearisome, depressing, and often humiliating. The body of the theatre was below the level of the street, and in the daytime was little better than a vast vault. If she entered by the front, she stumbled against seats and saw the figures of men and women silhouetted in the distance,

and heard the echo of cavernous voices. If by the back, she came upon the prompter's table set midway across the stage, with a twin gas-bracket shooting up behind it like a geyser, and an open space of some twenty feet by twenty in front, whereon the imaginary passions were to disport themselves at play.

Glory found real ones among them, and they were sometimes in hideous earnest. Jealousy, envy, uncharitableness, and all the rancour of life where the struggle for it is bitterest, attempts to take advantage of her inexperience, to rob her of the best positions on the stage, to cut out her lines which "scored;" these, with the weary waits, the half darkness, the chill atmosphere, the void in front, with its seats in linen covers, suggesting an audience of silent ghosts, and then the sense of the bright, busy, bustling, rattling, real world above, sent her home day after day with a headache, a heartache, and tears bubbling out of her eyes.

And when she had conquered these conditions or settled down to them, and had made such progress with her part as to throw away her scrip, the old horror of the woman she was to make herself into came back as a new terror. The visionary Gloria was very proud and vain and selfish, and trampled everything under foot that she might possess the world and the things of the world.

Meantime the real Gloria had a far different part to play. Every morning, with a terrible reality at her heart, she glanced over the newspapers for news of John Storm. She had not far to look. A sort of grotesque romance had gathered about him, as of a modern Don Quixote tilting at windmills. His name was the point of a pun; there were cartoons, caricatures, and all other forms of the joke that is not a joke because it is an insult.

Sometimes she took stolen glances at his work. On Sunday morning she walked through Soho, past the people sitting on their doorsteps reading the sporting intelligence in the Sunday papers, with their larks in cages hung on nails overhead, until she came to the church, and heard the singing inside, and saw chalked up on the walls the legend, "God bless the Farver!"

"Strange charge against a clergyman!" It was a low-class paper, and the charge was a badge of honour. A young ruffian (it was Charles Wilkes) had been brought up on remand on a charge of assaulting Father Storm, and being sentenced to a week's imprisonment, notwithstanding the Father's appeal and offer of bail, he had accused the clergyman of relations with his sweetheart (it was Agatha Jones).

Glory's anger at the world's treatment of John Storm deepened to a great love of the misunderstood and down-trodden man. She saw an announcement of his last service, and determined to go to it. The church was crowded, chiefly by the poor, and the air was heavy with the smell of oranges and beer. It was a week-day evening, and when the choir came in, followed by John Storm in his black cassock, Glory could not help a thrill of physical joy at being near him.

The text was, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outside, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness!" The first half of the sermon was a denunciation of the morality of men. We made clean the outside of the platter, but the so-called purity of England was a smug sham built upon rottenness and sin! There were men among us, damned sensualists, left untouched by the idleness of the public

conscience, who did not even know where their children were to be found. Let them go down into the gutters of life and look for their own faces, and—God forgive them!—their mothers' faces, among the outcast and the criminal. The second half was a defence of woman. The sins of the world against women were the most crying wrongs of the time. Had they ever reflected on the heroism of women, on their self-denying, unrewarded labour! Oh, why was woman held so cheap as in this immoral London of to-day? There had been scarcely a breach of the law of nature by women, and not one that men were not chiefly to blame for. Men tempted them by love of dress, of ease, of money, and of fame, to forget their proper vocation; but every true woman came right in the end, and preferred to the false and fictitious labour for worldly glory a mother's silent and unseen devotion, counting it no virtue at all. "Yes, women, mothers, girls, in your hands lies the salvation of England. May you live in this prospect, and may God and His ever-blessed Mother be your reward all through this weary life and in glory everlasting."

There was a procession with banners, cross, stars, green and blue fleur-de-lis, but Glory saw none of it. She was kneeling with head down and heart choked with emotion. The next she knew the service was over, the congregation was gone; only one old woman in widow's weeds was left, jingling a bunch of keys.

"Has the Father gone?"

"No, ma'am; he is still in the sacristy."

"Show me to it."

At the next moment, with fluttering throat and a look of mingled love and awe, she was standing eye to eye with John Storm in the little bare chamber of the church.

"Glory, why do you come here?"

"I can't help it."

"But we said good-bye and parted."

"*You* did; I didn't. It was not easy——"

"Easy? I told you it wouldn't be easy, my child; and it hasn't been. I said I should suffer, and I have suffered. But I've borne it—you see I've borne it. Don't ask me at what cost."

"Oh, oh, oh!" and she covered her face.

"Yes, the devil tortured me with love first. I was seeing you and hearing you everywhere and in everything, Glory. But I got over that, and then he tortured me with remorse. I had left you to the mercy of the world. It was my duty to watch over you. I did it too."

She glanced up quick.

"Ah! you never knew that! But no matter! It's all over now, and I'm a different man entirely. But why do you come and torment me again? It's nothing to you, nothing at all. You can shake it off in a moment. That's your nature, Glory; you can't help it. But have you no pity? You find me here, trying to help the helpless—the brave girls who have the virtue to be poor, and the strength to be weak, and the courage to be friendless. Why can't you leave me alone? What am I to you? Nothing at all! You care nothing for me, nothing whatever."

She glanced up again, and the look of love in her eyes was stronger now than the look of awe. He saw it, and could not help knowing how strongly it worked upon his feelings.

"Go back to your own world, unhappy girl! You love it—you must; you have sacrificed the best impulses of your heart to it!"

She was smiling now. It was the old radiant smile, but with a gleam of triumph in it that he had never seen before. It worked like madness upon him, and he tried to insult her again.

"Go back to your own company, to the people who *play* at real life, and build toy-houses, and give themselves away body and soul for the clapping of hands in a theatre! Go back to the lies and hypocrisies of society, and the brainless mashers who adorn it! They dance superbly and are at home in drawing-rooms, and know all about sporting matters and theatrical affairs! I know none of these things, and I am kicked and cuffed, and ridiculed and hounded down as an indecent man or shunned as a moral leper! Why do you come to me?" he cried, hoarse and husky.

But she only stretched out her hands to him and said, "Because I love you!"

"What are you saying?" He was quivering with pain.

"I love you, and have always loved you, and you love me—you know you do—you love me still!"

"Glory!"

"John!"

"For God's sake! Glory!"

With a wild shout of joy he rushed upon her, flung his arms about her, and covered her face and hands with kisses. After a moment he whispered, "Not here, not here;" and she felt, too, that the room was suffocating them, and they must go out into the open air, the fields, the Park.

Somebody was knocking at the door. It was Mrs. Pincher. A man was waiting to speak to the Father. They found him in the lane. It was Jupe, the waiter.

His simple face was a strange expression of joy and fear, as if he wished to smile and dare not.

"My pore missis 'as got off and wants to come 'ome, sir, and I thought as you'd tell me what I oughter do."

"Take her back and forgive her, my man; that's the Christian course."

His love was now boundless; his large charity embraced everything, and going off he saluted everybody. "Good-evening, Mrs. Pincher. Good-night, Lydia."

"Well, 'e *is* a Father, too, and no mistake!" somebody was saying behind him as he went away with Glory.

The moon was at the full, and while they were passing through the streets it struggled with the gas from the shop windows as the flame of a fire struggles with the sunshine, but when they passed under the trees it shone out in its white splendour like a bride. The immeasurable vault above was silvered with stars, too, through depth on depth of space, and all the glorious earth and heaven seemed to smile the smile of love. A strong south breeze was blowing, and as it shook the trees of the Park, that blessed patch of nature in the midst of the toiling city seemed to sing the song of love!

Their hands found each other, and they walked along almost in silence, afraid to break the spell of their dream lest they should awake and find it gone. It seemed wonderful to him that they were together, and he could hardly believe it was reality, though the touch of her hand filled him with a strange physical exultation which he had never felt before. He seemed to be walking on the clouds, and she too was swaying by his side as if her blood was dancing. Sometimes she dried her glistening

eyes, and once she stopped and swung in front of him and looked long at him, and then raised her face to his and kissed him.

"Whether you like it or not, your life is bound up with mine for ever and ever!" she whispered.

"It had to be," he answered. "I know it now. I can no longer deceive myself."

"And we shall be happy? In spite of all you said, we shall be very happy, eh?"

"Yes; that will be quite forgotten, Glory."

"And forgiven," she said, and then between a sigh and a blush she asked him to kiss her again.

"My love!"

"My soul!"

The wind swept the hood of her cape about her head and he could smell the fragrance of her hair.

He tried to think what he had done to deserve such happiness, but all the suffering he had gone through seemed as nothing compared to a joy like this. The great clock of Westminster swung its hollow sounds into the air, which went riding by on the wind like the notes of an organ, now full and now as soft as a baby's whisper. They could hear the far-off rumble of the vast city which fringed their blessed island like a mighty sea, and through the pulse of their clasped hands it seemed as if they felt the pulse of the world. An angel had come down and breathed on the face of the waters, and it was God's world after all.

He took her home, and they parted at the door. "Don't come in to-night," she whispered. She wished to be alone, that she might think it all out and go over it again, every word, every look. There was a lingering hand-clasp and then she was gone.

He returned through the Park and tried to step over the very places where her feet had trod. On reaching Buckingham Gate, he turned back and walked round the Park, and again round it, and yet again. The bells tolled out the hours, the cabs went westward with ladies in evening wraps going home from theatres, the tide of traffic ebbed farther and farther and died down, but still he walked and the wind sang to him.

"God cannot blame us," he thought. "We were made to love each other." He uncovered his head to let the wind comb through his hair, and he was happy, happy, happy! Sometimes he shut his eyes, and then it was hard to believe that she was not walking by his side, a fragrant presence in the moonlight, going step by step with him.

When the day was near the wind had gone, the little world of wood was silent, and his footsteps crunched on the gravel. Then a yellow gleam came in the sky to the east, and a chill gust swept up as a scout before the dawn, the trees began to shiver, the surface of the lake to creep, the birds to call, and the world to stretch itself and yawn.

"Peace in her chamber, wheresoe'er
It be—a holy place."

As he went home by Birdcage Walk the Park was still heavy with sleep, and its homeless wanderers had not yet risen from their couches on the seats. A pale mist was lying over London, but the towers of the Abbey stood clear above it, and pigeons were wheeling around them like sea-fowl about rocks in the sea. What a night it had been! A night of dreams, of love, of rapture!

The streets were empty and very quiet—only the slow rattle of the dust-cart and the measured step of police-

men changing beats. Long blue vistas and a cemetery silence as of a world under the great hand of the gentle brother of Death, and then the clang of Big Ben striking six.

A letter was waiting for John in the breathless hall. It was from the Bishop of London: "Come and see me at St. James's Square."

XV.

SUDDENLY there sprang out to Glory the charm and fascination of the life she was putting away. Trying to be true to her altered relations with John Storm, she did not go to rehearsal the next morning, but not yet having the courage of her new position, she did not tell Rosa her true reason for staying away. The part was exhausting—it tried her very much; a little break would do no harm. Rosa wrote to apologise for her on the score of health, and thus the first cloud of dissimulation rose up between them.

Two days passed, and then a letter came from the manager: "Trust you are rested and will soon be back. The prompter read your lines, but everything has gone to pieces. Slack, slovenly, spiritless, stupid, nobody acting, and nobody awake, it seems to me. 'All right at night, governor,' and the usual nonsense. Shows how much we want you. But envious people are whispering that you are afraid of the part. The blockheads! If you succeed this time you'll be made for life, my dear. And you *will* succeed!—Yours merrily," &c.

With this were three letters addressed to the theatre. One of them was from a press-cutting agency asking to be allowed to supply all newspaper articles relating to herself, and enclosing a paragraph as a specimen: "A

little bird whispers that 'Gloria' as 'Gloria' is to be a startling surprise. Those who have seen her rehearse... But mum's the word—an' we could an we would," &c. Another of the letters was from the art editor of an illustrated weekly asking for a sitting to their photographer for a full-page picture, and the third enclosed the card of an interviewer on an evening paper. Only three days ago Glory would have counted all this as nothing, yet now she could not help but feel a thrilling, joyous excitement.

Drake called after the absence of a fortnight. He had come to speak of his last visit. His face was pale and serious, not fresh and radiant as usual, his voice was shaking and his manner nervous. Glory had never seen him exhibit so much emotion, and Rosa looked on in dumb astonishment.

"I was to blame," he said, "and I have come to say so. It was a cowardly thing to turn the man out of his church, and it was worse than cowardly to use you in doing it. Everything is fair, they say, in . . ." But he flushed up like a girl and stopped, and then faltered, "Anyhow I'm sorry—very sorry; and if there is anything I can do——"

Glory tried to answer him, but her heart was beating violently, and she could not speak.

"In fact, I've tried to make amends already. Lord Robert has a living vacant in Westminster, and I've asked him to hand it over to the Bishop with the request that Father Storm——"

"But will he?"

"I've told him he must. It's the least we can do if we are to have any respect for ourselves. And anyhow, I'm about tired of this anti-Storm uproar. It may be all

very well for men like me to object to the man—I deny his authorities, and think him a man out of his century and country—but for these people with initials, who write in the religious papers, to rail at him, those shepherds who live on five thousand a year and pretend to follow One who hadn't a home or a second coat, and whose friends were harlots and sinners, though He was no sinner Himself—it's infamous, it's atrocious, it raises my gorge against their dead creeds and paralytic churches. Whatever his faults, he is built on a large plan; he has the Christ idea, and he is a man and a gentleman, and I'm ashamed that I took advantage of him. That's all over now, and there's no help for it; but if I might hope that you will forgive—and forget——”

“Yes,” said Glory in a low voice, and then there was silence, and when she lifted her head Drake was gone and Rosa was wiping her eyes.

“It was all for love of you, Glory. A woman can't hate a man when he does wrong for love of herself.”

John Storm came in later the same day, when Rosa had gone out, and Glory was alone. He was a different man entirely. His face looked round and his dark eyes sparkled. The clouds of his soul seemed to have drifted away, and he was boiling over with enthusiasm. He laughed constantly, and there was something almost depressing in the lumbering attempts at humour of the serious man.

“What do you think has happened? The Bishop sent for me and offered me a living in Westminster. It turns out to be in the gift of Lord Robert Ure; but no thanks to him for it. Lady Robert was at the bottom of everything. She had called on the Bishop. He remembered me at the Brotherhood, and told me all about

it. St. Jude's, Brown's Square, on the edge of the worst quarter in Christendom! It seems the Archdeacon expected it for Golightly, his son-in-law. The Reverend Joshua called on me this morning and tried to bully me, but I soon bundled him off to Botany Bay. Said the living had been promised to him—a lie, of course. I soon found that out. A lie is well named, you know—it hasn't a leg to stand upon. Ha, ha, ha!"

Nothing would serve but that they should go to look at the scene of their future life, and with Don—he had brought his dog; it had to be held back from the pug under the table—they set off immediately. It was Saturday night, and as they dipped down into the slums that lie under the shadow of the Abbey, Old Pye Street, Peter's Street, and Duck Lane were aflame with the coarse lights of open naphtha lamps, and all but impassable with costers' barrows. There were the husky voices of the street hawkers, the hoarse laughter, the quarrelling, the oaths, the rasping shouts of the butcher selling chunks of dark joints by auction, the screeches of the roast-potato man, and the smell of stale vegetables and fried fish. "Jow, 'ow much a pound for yer turmaters?" "Three-pence? I gave mor'n that for 'em myself." "Garn!" "S'elp me Gawd, I did, mum!"

"Isn't it a glorious scene?" said John; and Glory, who felt chilled and sickened, recalled herself from some dream of different things altogether and said, "Isn't it?"

"Sanctuary, too! What human cats we are! The poor sinners cling to the place still!"

He took her into the alleys and courts that score and wrinkle the map of Westminster like an old man's face, and showed her the "model" lodging-houses and the

gaudily-decorated hells where young girls and soldiers danced and drank.

"What's the use of saying to these people, 'Don't drink; don't steal?' They'll answer, 'If you lived in these slums you would drink too.' But we'll show them that we can live here and do neither—that will be the true preaching."

And then he pictured a life of absolute self-sacrifice, which she was to share with him. "You'll manage all money matters, Glory. You can't think how I'm swindled. And then I'm such a donkey as far as money goes—that's not far with me, you know. Ha, ha, ha! Who's to find it? Ah, God pays His own debts. He'll see to that."

They were to live under the church itself; to give bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked; to set up their Settlement in the gaming-house of the Sharkeys, now deserted and shut up; to take in the *undeserving* poor—the people who had nothing to say for themselves, precisely those; and thus they were to show that they belonged neither to the publicans and sinners nor to the Scribes and Pharisees.

"Only let us get rid of self. Only let us show that self-interest never enters our head in one single thing we do . . ." And meantime Glory, who had turned her head aside with a lump in her throat, heard someone behind them saying—

"Lawd, Jow, that's the curick and his dorg—'im as got pore Sharkey took! See 'im with the laidy?"

"S'elp me, so it is! Another good man gorn to 'is gruel, and all 'long of a bloomin' dorg."

They walked round by the church. John was talking rapturously at every step, and Glory was dragging

after him like a criminal going to the pillory. At last they came out by Great Smith Street, and he cried, "See, there's the house of God under its spider's web of scaffolding, and here's Broad Sanctuary—broad enough in all conscience! Look!"

A crowd of girls and men were trooping out of a place of entertainment opposite, and there were screams and curses. "Look at 'im!" cried a woman's voice. "There 'e is, the swine! And 'e was the ruin of me, and now 'e's 'listed for a soldier, and goin' off with another woman!"

"You're bleedin' drunk, that's what you are," said a man's voice, "and if you down't take kear I'll send ye 'ome on a dower!"

"Strike me, will ye, ye dog? Do it! I dare you!"

"She ain't worth it, soldier—come along," said another female voice, whereupon the first broke into a hurricane of oaths; and a little clergyman going by at the moment—it was the Rev. J. Golightly—said, "Dear, dear! Are there no policemen about?" and so passed on with his tall wife tucked under his arm.

John Storm pressed through the crowd and came between the two who were quarrelling. By the light of the lamp he could see them. The man was Charlie Wilkes, in the uniform of a soldier; the woman, with the paint running on her face, her fringe disordered, and her back hair torn down, was Aggie Jones.

"We down't want no religion 'ere," said Charlie, sneering.

"You'll get some, though, if you're not off quick!" said John. The man looked round for the dog and a moment afterwards he had disappeared.

Glory came up behind. "Oh, Aggie, woman, is it

you?" she said, and then the girl began to cry in a drunken sob.

"Girls is cruel put upon, mum," said one of the women; and another cried, "Nix, the slops!" and a policeman came pushing his way and saying, "Now, then, move on! We ain't going to stand 'ere all night."

"Call a cab, officer," said John.

"Yes, sir—certainly, Father. Four-wheeler!"

"Where do you live, Aggie?" said Glory; but the girl, now sobbing drunk, was too far gone to follow her.

"She lives in Brown's Square, sir," said the woman who had spoken before, and when the cab came up she was asked to get in with the other three.

It was a tenement house, fronting to one façade of St. Jude's, and Aggie's room was on the second storey. She was helpless, and John carried her up the stairs. The place was in hideous disorder, with clothing lying about on chairs, underclothing scattered on the floor, the fire out, many cigarette ends in the fender, a candle stuck in a beer bottle, and a bunch of withered roses on the table.

As John laid the girl on the bed she muttered, "Lemme alone!" and when he asked what was to happen to her when she grew old if she behaved like this when young, she mumbled, "Don't want to be old. Who's goin' to like me then, d'ye think?"

Half-an-hour afterwards Glory and John were passing through the gates into Clement's Inn, with its moonlight and silence, its odour of moistened grass, its glimpse of the stars, and the red and white blinds of its windows lit up round about. John was still talking rapturously. He was now picturing the part which Glory was to play in the life they were to live together. She was to help

and protect their younger sisters, the child-women, the girls in peril, to enlist their loyalty and filial tenderness for the hour of temptation.

"Won't it be glorious? To live the life, the real life of warfare with the world's wickedness and woe. Won't it be magnificent? You'll do it too! You'll go down into those slums and sloughs which I've shown you to-night—they are the cradle of shame and sin, Glory, and this wicked London rocks it!—you'll go down into them like a ministering angel to raise the fallen and heal the wounded! You'll live in them, revel in them, rejoice in them; they'll be your battle-field. Isn't that better, far better, a thousand times better than *playing* at life, and all its fashions and follies and frivolities?"

Glory struggled to acquiesce, and from time to time in a trembling voice she said, "Yes," and "Oh yes," until they came to the door of the Garden House, and then a strange thing happened. Somebody was singing in the drawing-room to the music of the piano. It was Drake. The window was open and his voice floated over the moonlit garden—

"Du liebes Kind, komm geh' mit mir!
Gar schöne Spiele' ich mit dir."

Suddenly it seemed to Glory that two women sprang into life in her—one who loved John Storm and wished to live and work beside him, the other who loved the world and felt that she could never give it up. And these two women were fighting for her heart, which should have it and hold it and possess it for ever.

She looked up at John and he was smiling triumphantly. "Are you happy?" she asked.

"Happy! I know a hundred men who are a hundred

times as rich as I, but not one who is a hundredth part as happy!"

"Darling!" she whispered, holding back her tears. Then looking away from him she said, "And do you really think I'm good enough for a life of such devotion and self-sacrifice?"

"Good enough!" he cried, and for a moment his merry laughter drowned the singing overhead.

"But will the world think so?"

"Assuredly. But who cares what the world thinks?"

"We do, dear—we must!"

And then while the song went on she began to depreciate herself in a low voice and with a creeping sense of hypocrisy—to talk of her former life in London as a danger, of the tobacco-shop, the foreign clubs, the music-hall, and all the mire and slime with which she had been besmirched. "Everything is known now, dear. Have you never thought of this? It is your duty to think of it."

But he only laughed again with a joyous voice. "What's the odds?" he said. "The world is made up for the most part of low, selfish, sensual beings, incapable of belief in noble aims. Every innovator in such a world exposes himself to the risk of being slandered or ridiculed, or even shut up in a lunatic asylum. But who wouldn't rather be St. Theresa in her cell than Catherine of Russia on her throne? And in your case, what does it come to anyway? Only that you have gone through the fiery furnace and come out unscathed. All the better—you'll be a living witness, a proof that it is possible to pass through this wicked Babylon unharmed and untouched."

"Yes, if I were a man—but with a woman it is so different. It is an honour to a man to have conquered the world, but a disgrace to a woman to have fought

with it. Yes, believe me, I know what I'm saying. That's the cruel tragedy in a woman's life, do what you will to hide it. And then you are so much in the eye of the world; and besides your own position there is your family's, your uncle's. Think what it would be if the world pointed the finger of scorn at your—at your mission—at your high and noble aims—and all on account of me! You would cease to love me—and I—I——”

“Listen!” He had been shuffling restlessly on the pavement before her. “Here I stand! Here are you! Let the waves of public opinion dash themselves against us, we stand or fall together!”

“Oh, oh, oh!”

She was crying on his breast, but with what mixed and conflicting feelings! Joy, pain, delight, dread, hope, disappointment. She had tried to dishonour herself in his eyes, and it would have broken her heart if she had succeeded. But she had failed and he had triumphed, and that was harder still to bear.

From overhead they heard the last lines of the song—

“Erreicht den Hof mit Müh und Noth
In seinen Armen das Kind war todt.”

“Good-night,” she whispered, and fled into the house. The lights in the dining-room were lowered, but she found a telegram that was waiting on the mantelpiece. It was from Sefton, the manager: “Author arrived in London to-day. Hopes to be at rehearsal Monday. Please be there certain.”

The world was seizing her again, the imaginary Gloria was dragging her back with visions of splendour and success. But she crept upstairs, and went by the drawing-room on tiptoe. “Not to-night,” she thought. “My face is not fit to be seen to-night.”

There was a dying fire in her bedroom, and her evening gown had been laid out on a chair in front of it. She put the gown away in a drawer, and out of a box which she drew from beneath the bed she took a far different costume. It was the nurse's outdoor cloak, which she had bought for use at the hospital. She held it a moment by the tips of her fingers and looked at it, and then put it back with a sigh.

"Gloria! is that you?" Rosa called up the stairs; and Drake's cheery voice cried, "Won't our nightingale come down and give us a stave before I go?"

"Too late! Just going to bed. Good-night," she answered. Then she lit a candle, and sat down to write a letter.

"It's no use, dear John, I cannot! It would be like putting bad money into the offertory to put me into that holy work. Not that I don't admire it, and love it, and worship it. It is the greatest work in the world, and last week I thought I could count everything else as dross, only remembering that I loved you, and that nothing else mattered. But now I know that this was a vain and fleeting sentiment, and that the sights and scenes of your work repel me on a nearer view, just as the hospital repelled me in the early mornings, when the wards were being cleaned and the wounds dressed, and before the flowers were laid about.

"Oh, forgive me, forgive me! But if I am fit to join your life at all, it cannot be in London. That 'old serpent called the devil and Satan' would be certain to torment me here. I could not live within sight and sound of London and go on with the life you live. London would drag me back. I feel as if it were an earlier lover, and I must fly away from it. Is that possible? Can we go elsewhere? It is a monstrous demand, I know. Say

you cannot agree to it. Say so at once—it will serve me right.”

The stout watchman of the New Inn was calling midnight when Glory stole out to post her letter. It fell into the letter-box with a thud, and she crept back like a guilty thing.

XVI.

NEXT morning Mrs. Callender heard John Storm singing to himself before he left his bedroom, and she was standing at the bottom of the stairs when he came down three steps at a time.

“Bless me, laddie,” she said, “to see your face shining, a body would say that somebody had left ye a legacy or bought ye a benefice instead of taking your church frae ye!”

“Why, yes, and better than both, and that’s just what I was going to tell you.”

“You must be in a hurry to do it too, coming downstairs like a cataract.”

“You came down like a cataract yourself once on a time, auntie; I’ll lay my life on that.”

“Aye, did I, and not sae lang since neither. And fools and prudes cried ‘Oh!’ and called me a tomboy. But, hoots! I was nought but a body born a wee before her time. All the lasses are tomboys now, bless them, the bright heartsome things!”

“Auntie,” said John softly, seating himself at the breakfast table, “what d’ye think?”

She eyed him knowingly. “Nay, I’m ower thrang working to be bothered thinking. Out with it, laddie.”

He looked wise. “Don’t you remember saying that work like mine wanted a woman’s hand in it?”

Her old eyes blinked. "Maybe I did, but what of it?"

"Well, I've taken your advice, and now a woman's hand *is* coming into it to guide it and direct it."

"It must be the right hand though, mind that."

"It *will* be the right hand, auntie."

"Weel, that's grand," with another twinkle. "I thought it might be the *left*, ye see, and ye might be putting a wedding-ring on it!" And then she burst into a peal of laughter.

"However did you find it out?" he said with looks of astonishment.

"Tut, laddie! love and a cough cannot be hidden. And to think a woman couldna see through you too! But come," tapping the table with both hands, "who is she?"

"Guess."

"Not one of your Sisters—no?" with hesitation.

"No," with emphasis.

"Some other simpering thing, na doot—they're all alike these days."

"But didn't you say the girls were all tomboys now?"

"And if I did, d'ye want a body to be singing the same song always? But come, what like is she? When I hear of a lassie I like fine to know her colour first. What's her complexion?"

"Guess again."

"Is she fair? But what a daft auld dunce I am!—to be sure she's fair."

"Why, how did you know that, now?"

"Pooh! They say a dark man is a jewel in a fair woman's eye, and I'll warrant it's as true the other way about. But what's her name?"

John's face suddenly straightened and he pretended not to hear.

"What's her name?" stamping with both feet.

"Dear me, auntie, what an ugly old cap you're wearing."

"Ugly?" reaching up to the glass. "Who says it's ugly?"

"I do."

"Tut! you're only a bit boy born yesterday. But, man, what's all this botherment about telling a lassie's name?"

"I'll bring her to see you, auntie."

"I should think you will indeed, and mighty quick too!"

This was on Sunday, and by the first post on Monday John Storm received Glory's letter. It fell on him like a blast out of a cloud in the black north-east and cut him to the heart's core. He read it again, and being alone, he burst into laughter. He took it up a third time, and when he had finished there was something at his throat that seemed to choke him. His first impulse was fury. He wanted to rush off to Glory and insult her, to ask her if she was mad or believed him to be so. Because she was a coward herself, being slave-bound to the world and afraid to fight it face to face, did she wish to make a coward of him also—to see him sneak away from the London that had kicked him, like a cur with its tail between its legs?

After this there came an icy chill and an awful consciousness that mightier forces were at work than any mere human weakness. It was the world itself, the great pitiless world, that was dividing them again as it had divided them before, but irrevocably now—not as a playful nurse that puts petted children apart, but as a torrent that tears the cliffs asunder. "Leave the world, my son, and return to your unfinished vows." Could it be true

that this was only another reminder of his broken obedience?

Then came pity. If Glory was slave-bound to the world, which of us was not in chains to something? And the worst slavery of all was slavery to self. But that was an abyss he dared not look into; and he began to think tenderly of Glory, to tell himself how much she had to sacrifice, to remember his anger and to be ashamed.

A week passed, and he went about his work in a helpless way, like a derelict without rudder or sail, and with the sea roaring about it. Every afternoon when he came home from Soho Mrs. Callender would trip into the hall wearing a new cap with a smart bow, and finding that he was alone she would say, "Not to-day, then?"

"Not to-day," he would answer, and they would try to smile. But seeing the stamp of suffering on his face, she said at last, "Tut, laddie! they love too much who die for love."

On the Sunday afternoon following he turned again towards Clement's Inn. He had come to a decision at last, and was calm, and even content, yet his happiness was like a gourd which had grown up in a day, and the morrow's sun had withered it.

Glory had been to rehearsal every day that week. Going to the theatre on Monday night she had said to herself, "There can be no harm in rehearsing—I'm not compelled to play." Notwithstanding her nervousness, the author had complimented her on her passion and self-abandonment, and going home she had thought, "I might even go through the first performance, and then give it all up. If I had a success, that would be beautiful, splendid, almost heroic—it would be thrilling to abandon everything!" Not hearing from John, she told

herself he must be angry, and she felt sorry for him. "He doesn't know yet how much I am going to do." Thus the other woman in her tempted and overcame her, and drew her on from day to day.

Mrs. Macrae sent Lord Robert to invite her to luncheon on Sunday. "There can be no harm in going there," she thought. She went with Rosa, and was charmed with the lively, gay, and brilliant company. Clever and beautiful women, clever and handsome men, and nearly all of them of her own profession. The mistress of the mansion kept open house after church parade on Sunday, and she sat at the bottom of her table, dressed in black velvet, with the Archdeacon on her right and a famous actor on her left. Lord Robert sat at the head and talked to a lady whose remarks were heard all over the room; but Lady Robert was nowhere to be seen; there was a hush when her name was mentioned, and then a whispered rumour that she had differences with her husband, and had scandalised her mother by some act of indiscretion.

Glory's face beamed, and for the first half-hour she seemed to be on the point of breaking into a rapturous "Well!" Nearly opposite to her at the table sat a lady whose sleepy look and drowsy voice and airs of languor showed that she was admired, and that she knew it. Glory found her very amusing, and broke into little trills of laughter at her weary, withering comments. This drew the attention of some of the men; they found the contrast interesting. The conversation consisted first of hints, half signs, brilliant bits of by-play, and Glory rose to it like a fish to a May-fly. Then it fell upon bicycling and the costumes ladies wore for it. The languid one commented upon the female fetish, the skirt, and condemned "bloomers," whereupon Glory declared that they were just charming,

and being challenged (by a gentleman) for her reasons, she said, "Because when a girl's got them on she feels as if she's an understudy for a man, and may even have a chance of playing the part itself in another and a better world."

Then there was general laughter, and the gentleman said, "You're in the profession yourself now, aren't you?"

"Just a stranger within your gates," she answered; and when the talk turned on a recent lawsuit, and the languid one said it was inconceivable that the woman concerned could have been such a coward in relation to the man, Glory protested that it was just as natural for a woman to be in fear of a man (if she loved him), as to be afraid of a mouse or to look under the bed.

"*Ma chère*," said a dainty little lady sitting next but one (she had come to London to perform in a silent play), "they tells me you's half my countrywoman. All right. Will you not speak de French to poor me?" And when Glory did so, the little one clapped her hands and declared she had never heard the English speak French before.

"Say French-cum-Irish," said Glory, "or rather French which begat Irish, which begat Manx!"

"Original, isn't she?" said somebody who was laughing.

"Like a sea-gull among so many pigeons!" said somebody else; and the hothouse airs of the languid lady were lost as in a fresh gust from the salt sea.

But her spirits subsided the moment she had recrossed the threshold. As they were going home in a cab past the hospital and down Piccadilly, Rosa, who was proud and happy, said, "There! All society isn't stupid and insipid, you see; and there are members of your own pro-

fession who try to live up to the ideal of moral character attainable by a gentleman in England even yet."

"Yes, no doubt. But, Rosa, there's another kind of man altogether, whose love has the reverence of a religion, and if I ever meet a man like that—one who is ready to trample all the world under his feet for me—I think—yes, I really think I shall leave everything behind and follow him."

"Leave everything behind, indeed! That *would* be pretty! When everything yields before you too, and all the world and his wife are waiting to shout your praises!"

Rosa had gone to her office, and Glory was turning over some designs for stage costumes, when Liza came in to say that the "Farver" was coming upstairs.

"He has come to scold me," thought Glory; so she began to hum, to push things about, and fill the room with noise. But when she saw his drawn face and wide-open eyes, she wanted to fall on his neck and cry.

"You have come to tell me you can't do what I suggested?" she said. "Of course, you can't."

"No," he said slowly, very slowly. "I have thought it all over, and concluded that I can—that I must. Yes, I am willing to go away, Glory; and when you are ready I shall be ready too."

"But where—where——?"

"I don't know yet; but I am willing to wait for the unrolling of the scroll. I am willing to follow step by step, not knowing whither. I am willing to go where God wills, for life or death."

"But your work in London—your great, great work——"

"God will see to that, Glory. He can do without any of us. None of us can do without Him. The sun will

set without any assistance, you know;" and the pale face made an effort to smile.

"But, John, my dear, dear John, this is not what you expected, what you have been thinking of and dreaming of, and building your hopes upon."

"No," he said; "and for your sake I am sorry, very sorry. I thought of a great career for you, Glory. Not rescue work merely—others can do that. There are many good women in the world—nearly all women are good, but few are great—and for the salvation of England, what England wants now is a great woman. . . . As for me—God knows best. He has His own way of weaning us from vanity and the snares of the devil. You were only an instrument in His hands, my child, hardly knowing what you were doing. Perhaps He has a work of intercession for us somewhere—far away from here—in some foreign mission-field—who can say?"

A feeling akin to terror caught her breath, and she looked up at him with fearful eyes.

"After all, I am glad that this has happened," he said. "It will help me to conquer self, to put self behind my back for ever, to show the world, by leaving London, that self has not entered into my count at all, and that I am thinking of nothing but my work."

A warm flush rose to her cheeks as he spoke, and again she wanted to fling herself on his neck and cry. But he was too calm for that, too sad and too spiritual. When he rose to go she held out her hands to him, but he only took them and carried them to his lips, and kissed them.

As soon as she was alone she flung herself down and cried, "Oh, give me strength to follow this man, who mistakes his love of me for the love of God!" But even

while she sat with bent head and her hands over her face, the creeping sense came back as of another woman within her who was fighting for her heart. She had conquered again, but at what a cost! The foreign mission-field—what associations had she with that? Only the memory of her father's lonely life and friendless death.

She was feeling cold and had begun to shiver when the door opened and Rosa entered.

"So he *did* come again?"

"Yes."

"I thought he would," and Rosa laughed coldly.

"What do you mean?"

"That when religious feelings take possession of a man he will stop at nothing to gain the end he has in view."

"Rosa," said Glory, flushing crimson, "if you imply that my friend is capable of one unworthy act or thought, I must ask you to withdraw your words absolutely and at once!"

"Very well, dear. I was only thinking for your own good. We working women must not ruin our lives or let anybody else ruin them. 'Duty,' 'self-sacrifice'—I know the old formulas, but I don't believe in them. Obey your own heart, my dear, that is your first duty. A man like Storm would take you out of your real self, and stop your career, and——"

"Oh, my career, my career! I'm tired to death of hearing of it!"

"Glory!"

"And who knows? I may not go on with it after all."

"If you have lost your sense of duty to yourself, have you forgotten your duty to Mr. Drake? Think what Mr. Drake has done for you!"

"Mr. Drake! Mr. Drake! I'm sick of that too."

"How strange you are to-night, Glory!"

"Am I? So are you. It's Mr. Drake here and Mr. Drake there! Are you trying to force me into his arms?"

"Is it you that say that, Glory?—you! and to me, too? Don't you see that this is a different case altogether? And if I thought of my own feelings only—consulted my own heart——"

"Rosa!"

"Ah! is it so very foolish? Yes, he is young and handsome, and rich and brilliant, while I—I am ridiculous."

"No, no, Rosa; I don't mean that."

"I do, though; and when you came in between us— young and beautiful and clever—everything that I was not, and could never hope to be—and he was so drawn to you—what was I to do? Nurse my hopeless and ridiculous love—or think of him—his happiness?"

"Rosa, my poor dear Rosa, forgive me! forgive me!"

An hour later, dinner being over, they had returned to the drawing-room. Rosa was writing at the table, and there was no sound in the room except the scratching of her pen, the falling of her slips of "copy," and the dull reverberation of the bell of St. Clement's Danes, which was ringing for evening service. Glory was sitting at the desk by the window, with her head on her hands, looking down into the garden. Out of the dead load at her heart she kept saying to herself, "Could I do that? Could I give up the one I loved for his own good, putting myself back, and thinking of him only?" And then a subtle hypocrisy stole over her, and she thought, "Yes, I could, I could," and in a fever of nervous excitement she began to write a letter.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and so with a woman's will. I cannot go abroad with you, dear, because I cannot allow myself to break up your life, for it *would* be that—it would, it would, you know it would! There are ten thousand men good enough for the foreign mission-field, but there is only one man in the world for your work in London. This is one of the things hidden from the wise and revealed to children and fools. It would be wrong of me to take you away from your great scene. I daren't do it. It would be too great a responsibility. My conscience must have been dead and buried when I suggested such a possibility! Thank God it has had a resurrection, and it is not yet too late."

But when the letter was sealed and stamped and sent out to the post, she thought, "I must be mad, and there is no method in my madness either. What do I want?—to join his life in London?" And then remembering what she had written, it seemed as if the other woman must have written it, the visionary woman, the woman she was making herself into day by day.

XVII.

JOHN STORM had left home early on Monday morning. It was the last day of his tenancy of the clergy-house, and there was much to do at Soho. Towards noon he made his way to the church at Bishopsgate Street for the first time since he had left the Brotherhood. It was mid-day service, and the little place was full of business men with their quick eyes and eager faces. The Superior preached, and the sermon was on the religious life. We were each composed of two beings, one temporal, the other eternal; one carnal, the other spiritual. Life was a constant warfare between these two nearly-matched forces,

and often the victory seemed to sway from this side to that. Our enemy with the chariots of iron was ourselves. There was a Judas in each one of us ready to betray us with a kiss if allowed. The lusts of the flesh were the most deadly sins, absolute chastity the most pleasing to God of all virtues. Did we desire to realise what the religious life could be? Then let us reflect upon the news which had come from the South Seas. What was the word that had fallen that morning on all Christendom like a thunderclap—say, rather, like the blast of a celestial trumpet? Father Damien was dead! Think of his lonely life in that distant island where doomed men lived out their days. Cut off from earthly marriage, with no one claiming his affection, in the same way as Christ, he was free to commit himself entirely to God and to God's afflicted children. He was truly married to Christ. Christ occupied his soul as Lord and spouse. Glorious life! Glorious death! Eternal crown of glory waiting for him in the glory everlasting!

When the service ended John Storm stepped up to speak to the Father. His wide-open eyes were flaming; he was visibly excited. "I came to ask a question," he said, "but it is answered already. I will follow Father Damien and take up his work. I was thinking of the mission-field, but my doubt was whether God had called me, and I had great fear of going uncalled. God brought me here this morning, not knowing what I was to do, but now I know, and my mind is made up at last."

The Father was not less moved. They went out into the courtyard together and walked to and fro, planning, scheming, contriving, deciding.

"You'll take the vows first, my son?"

"The vows?"

"The life vows."

"But—but will that be necessary?"

"It will be best. Think what a peculiar appeal it will have for those poor doomed creatures? They are cut off from the world by a terrible affliction, but you will be cut off by the graciousness of a Christ-fed purity. They are lepers made of disease; you will be as a leper for the kingdom of heaven's sake."

"But, Father, if that be so, how much greater the appeal will be if—if a woman goes out also. Say she is young and beautiful, and of great gifts."

"Brother Andrew may go with you, my son."

"Yes, Brother Andrew as well. But holy men in all ages have been bound by ties of intimacy and affection to good women who have lived and worked beside them."

"Sisters, my son, elder sisters always."

"And why not? Sister, indeed, and united to me by a great and spiritual love."

"We are none of us invincible, my son; let us not despise danger."

"Danger, Father! What is the worth of my religion if it does not enable me to defy that?"

"Well; well, do not decide too soon. I'll come to you at Soho this evening."

"Do; it's our last night there. I must tell my poor people what my plans are to be. Good-bye for the present, Father, good-bye."

"Good-bye, my son," and as John Storm went off with a light heart and bounding step the Father passed indoors with downcast face, saying to himself with a sigh, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

It was Lord Mayor's Day again, the streets were

thronged, and John Storm was long in forging his way home. Glory's letter was waiting for him, and he tore it open with nervous fingers, but when he had read it he laughed aloud. "God bless her! But she doesn't know everything yet." Mrs. Callender was out in the carriage. She would be back for lunch, and the maid was laying the cloth; but he would not wait. After scribbling a few lines in pencil to tell of his great resolve, he set off for Clement's Inn. The Strand was less crowded when he returned to it, and the newsboys were calling the evening papers with "Full memoir of Father Damien."

On coming home from rehearsal, Glory had found the costume for her third act, her great act, awaiting her. All day long she had been thinking of her letter to John, half ashamed of it, half regretting it, almost wishing it could be withdrawn. But the dress made a great tug at her heart, and she could not resist an impulse to try it on. The moment she had done so the visionary woman whose part she was to play seemed to take possession of her, and shame and regret were gone.

It was a magnificent stage costume, green as the grass in spring with the morning sun on it. The gown was a splendid brocade with gold-embroidered lace around the square-cut neck and about the shoulders of the tight-made sleeves. Round her hips was a sash of golden tissue, and its hanging ends were fringed with emeralds. A band of azure stones encircled her head, and her fingers were covered with turquoise rings.

She went to the drawing-room, shut the door, and began to rehearse the scene. It was where the imaginary Gloria, being vain and selfish, trampled everything under her feet that she might possess the world and the things

of the world. Glory spoke the words aloud, forgetting they were not her own, until she heard another voice saying, "May I come in, dear?"

It was John at the door. She was ashamed of her costume then, but there was no running away. "Yes, of course, come in," she cried, trembling all over, half afraid to be seen, and yet proud too of her beauty and her splendour. When he entered she was laughing nervously and was about to say, "See, this has happened before——"

But he saw nothing unusual, and she was disappointed and annoyed. Coming in breathless, as if he had been running, he flung himself down on one end of the couch, threw his hat on the other end, and said, "What did I tell you, Glory? That a way would open itself, and it has!"

"Really?"

"Didn't you think of it when you saw the news in the papers this morning?"

"What news?"

"That Father Damien is dead."

"But can you—do you really mean that—do you intend——"

"I do, Glory—I do."

"Then you didn't get my letter this morning?"

"Oh yes, dear, yes; but you were only thinking for me—God bless you!—that I was giving up a great scene for a little one. But this—this is the greatest scene in the world, Glory. Life is a small sacrifice; the true sacrifice is a living death, a living crucifixion."

She felt as if he had taken her by the throat and was choking her. He had got up and was walking to and fro, talking impetuously.

"Yes, it is a great sacrifice I am asking you to make now, dear. That far-off island, the poor lepers, and then life-long banishment. But God will reward you, and with interest too. Only think, Glory! Think of the effect of your mere presence out there among those poor doomed creatures! A young and beautiful woman! Not a melancholy old dolt like me, preaching and prating to them, but a bright and brilliant girl, laughing with them, playing games with them, making mimicry for them and singing to them in the voice of an angel. Oh, they'll love you, Glory, they'll worship you—you'll be next to God and His blessed Mother with them. And already I hear them saying among themselves, 'Heaven bless her! She might have had the world at her feet and made a great name and a great fortune, but she gave it all up—all, all, all—for pity and love of us!' Won't it be glorious, my child? Won't it be the noblest thing in all the world?"

And she struggled to answer, "Yes, no doubt—the noblest thing in all the world."

"Then you agree? Ah, I knew your heart spoke in your first letter, and you wanted to leave London. You shall, too, for God has willed it."

Then she recovered a little and made a nervous attempt to withdraw. "But the church at Westminster?"

He laughed like a boy. "Oh, Golightly may have that now, and welcome."

"But the work in London?"

"Ah, that's all right, Glory. Ever since I heard from you I have been dealing with the bonds which bound me to London one by one, unravelling some and breaking others. They are all discharged now, every one of them, and I need think of them no more. Self is put

behind for ever, and I can stand before God and say, 'Do with me as you will; I am ready for anything—anything!'"

"Oh!"

"Crying, Glory? My poor, dear child! But why are you crying?"

"It's nothing!"

"Are you sure—quite sure? Am I asking too much of you? Don't let us deceive ourselves—think——"

"Let us talk of something else now." She began to laugh. "Look at me, John—don't I look well to-day?"

"You always look well, Glory."

"But isn't there any difference—this dress, for instance?"

Then his sight came back and his big eyes sparkled. "How beautiful you are, dear!"

"Really? Do I look nice then—really?"

"My beautiful, beautiful girl!"

Her head was thrown back, and she glowed with joy. "Don't come too near me, you know—don't crush me."

"Nay, no fear of that—I should be afraid."

"Not that I mustn't be touched exactly."

"What will they think, I wonder, those poor lost creatures, so ugly, so disfigured?"

"And my red hair. This colour suits it, doesn't it?"

"Some Madonna, they'll say; the very picture of the Mother of God herself!"

"Are you—are you afraid of me in this frock, dear? Shall I run and take it off?"

"No, no; let me look at you again."

"But you don't like me to-day, for all that."

"I?"

"Do you know you've never once kissed me since you came into the room?"

"Glory!"

"My love, my love!"

"And you," he said, close to her lips, "are you ready for anything?"

"Anything," she whispered.

At the next moment she was holding herself off with her arms stiff about his neck, that she might look at him and at her lace sleeves at the same time. Suddenly a furrow crossed his brow. He had remembered the Father's warning, and was summoning all his strength.

"But out there I'll love you as a sister, Glory."

"Ah!"

"For the sake of those poor doomed beings cut off from earthly love we'll love each other as the angels love."

"Yes, that is the highest, purest, truest love, no doubt. Still——"

"What does the old Talmud say? 'He who divorces himself from the joys of earth weds himself to the glories of Paradise.'"

Her lashes were still wet; she was gazing deep into his eyes.

"And to think of being united in the next world, Glory—what happiness, what ecstasy!"

"Love me in this world, dearest," she whispered.

"You'll be their youth, Glory, their strength, their loveliness!"

"Be mine, darling, be mine!"

But the furrow crossed his brow a second time, and he disengaged himself before their lips had met again. Then he walked about the room as before, talking in

broken sentences. They would have to leave soon—very soon—almost at once. And now he must go back to Soho. There was so much to do—to arrange. On reaching the door he hesitated, quivering with love, hardly knowing how to part from her. She was standing with head down, half angry and half ashamed.

“Well, *au revoir*,” he cried in a strained voice, and then fled down the stairs. “The Father was right,” he thought. “No man is invincible. But, thank God, it is over! It can never occur again!”

Her glow had left her and she felt chilled and lost. There was no help for it now, and escape was impossible. She must renounce everything for the man who had renounced everything for her. Sitting on the couch, she dropped her head on the cushion, and cried like a child. In the lowest depths of her soul she knew full well that she could never go away, but she began to bid good-bye in her heart to the life she had been living. The charm and fascination of London began to pass before her like a panorama, with all the scenes of misery and squalor left out. What a beautiful world she was leaving behind her! She would remember it all her life long with useless and unending regret. Her tears were flowing through the fingers which were clasped beneath her face.

A postman's knock came to the door downstairs. The letter was from the manager, written in the swirl and rush of theatrical life, and reading like a telegram: “Theatre going on rapidly, men working day and night, rehearsals advanced and scenery progressing; might we not fix this day fortnight for the first performance?”

Enclosed with this was a letter from the author. “You are on the eve of an extraordinary success, dear Gloria, and I write to reassure and congratulate you. Some

signs of inexperience I may perhaps observe, some lack of ease and simplicity, but already it is a performance of so much passion and power that I predict for it a triumphant success. A great future awaits you. Don't shrink from it, don't be afraid of it; it is as certain as that the sun will rise to-morrow."

She carried the letter to her lips, then rose from the couch, and threw up her head, closed her eyes, and smiled. The visionary woman was taking hold of her again with the slow grip and embrace of the glacier.

Rosa came home to dine, and at sight of the new costume she cried, "Shade of Titian! what a picture!" During dinner she mentioned that she had met Mr. Drake, who had said that the Prince was likely to be present at the production, having asked for the date and other particulars.

"But haven't you heard the *great* news, dear? It's in all the late editions of the evening papers."

"What is it?" said Glory; but she saw what was coming.

"Father Storm is to follow Father Damien. That's the report, at all events; but he is expected to make a statement at his club to-night, and I have to be there for the paper."

As soon as dinner was over Rosa went off to Soho, and then Glory was brought back with a shock to the agony of her inward struggle. She knew that her hour had arrived, and that on her action now everything depended. She knew that she could never break the chains by which the world and her profession held her. She knew that the other woman had come, that she must go with her, and go for good. But the renunciation of love was terrible. The day had been soft and beautiful. It was falling asleep and yawning now, with a drowsy breeze

that shook the yellow leaves as they hung withered and closed on the thinning boughs like the fingers of an old maid's hand. She was sitting at the desk by the window, trying to write a letter. More than once she tore up the sheet, dried her eyes, and began again. What she wrote last was this:—

“It is impossible, dear John. I cannot go with you to the South Seas. I have struggled, but I cannot, I cannot! It is the greatest, noblest, sublimest mission in the world, but I am not the woman for these high tasks. I should be only a fruitless fig-tree, a sham, a hypocrite. It would be like taking a dead body with you to take me, for my heart would not be there. You would find that out, dear, and I should be ashamed.

“And then I cannot leave this life—I cannot give up London. I am like a child—I like the bustling streets, the brilliant thoroughfares, the crowds, the bands of music, the lights at night, and the sense of life. I like to succeed, too, and to be admired, and . . . yes, to hear ‘the clapping of hands in a theatre.’ You are above all this, and can look down at it as dross, and I like you for that also. But give it all up I can’t; I haven’t the strength; it is in my blood, dear, and if I part from it I must die.

“And then I like to be fondled and coaxed and kissed, and I want so much—oh, so much to be loved! I want somebody to tell me every day and always how much he loves me, and to praise me and pet me and forget everything else for me, everything, everything, even his own soul and salvation. You cannot do that; it would be sinful, and besides, it wouldn’t be love as you understand it, and as it ought to be, if you are to go out to that solemn and awful task.

“When I said I loved you I spoke the truth, dear,

and yet I didn't know what the word meant really, I didn't realise everything. I love you still—with all my heart and soul I love you; but now I know that there is a difference between us, that we can never come together. No, I cannot reach up to your austere heights. I am so weak; you are so strong. Your 'strength is as the strength of ten, because your heart is pure,' while I——

"I am unworthy of your thoughts, John. Leave me to the life I have chosen. It may be poor and vain and worthless, but it is the only life I'm fit for. And yet I love you . . . and you loved me. I suppose God makes men and women like that sometimes, and it is no use struggling.

"One kiss, dear—it is the last."

XVIII.

JOHN STORM went back to Victoria Square with a bright and joyful face, and found Mrs. Callender waiting for him, grim as a judge. He could see that her eyes were large and red with weeping, but she fell on him instantly with withering scorn.

"So you're here at last, are ye? A pretty senseless thing this is, to be sure! What are you dreaming about? Are you bewitched, or what? Do you suppose things can be broken off in this way? You to go to the leper islands indeed!"

"I'm called, auntie, and when God calls a man, what can he do but answer with Samuel——"

"Tut! Don't talk sic nonsense. Besides, Samuel had some sense. He waited to be called three times, and I havena heard this is your third time of calling."

John Storm laughed, and that provoked her to towering indignation. "Good God! what are you thinking of,

man? There's that puir lassie—you're running away from her, too, aren't you? It's shameful, it's disgraceful, it's unprincipled, and *you* to do it too!"

"You needn't trouble about that, auntie," said John; "she is going with me."

"What?" cried Mrs. Callender, and her face expressed boundless astonishment.

"Yes," said John, "you women are brimful of courage, God bless you, and she's the bravest of you all."

"But you'll no have the assurance to tak' that puir bit lassie to yonder God-forsaken spot?"

"She wants to go . . . at least she wants to leave London."

"What! does she? Weel, weel! But didn't I say she was nought but one of your Sisters or sic-like? . . . And you're going to let a slip of a girl tak' you away frae your ain work and your ain duty . . . and you call yourself a man!"

He began to coax and appease her, and before long the grim old face was struggling between smiles and tears.

"Tut! get along wi' ye! I've a great mind, though . . . I'd be liking fine to see her anyway. . . . Now where does she bide in London?"

"Why do you want to know that, auntie?"

"What's it to you, laddie? Can't a body call to say 'Good-bye' to a lassie, and tak' her a wee present before going away, without asking a man's permission?"

"I shouldn't do it, though, if I were you."

"And why not, pray?"

"Because she's as bright as a star and as quick as a diamond, and she'd see through you in a twinkling. Besides, I shouldn't advise——"

"Keep your advice, like your salt, till you're asked

for it, my man. . . . And to think of any reasonable body giving up his work in London for that . . . that——”

“Good men have gone out to the mission-field, auntie.”

“Mission fiddlesticks! Just a barber’s chair, fit for every comer.”

“And then this isn’t the mission-field exactly either.”

“Mair’s the pity, and then you wouldna be running bull-neck on your death before your time.”

“None of us can do that, auntie, for Heaven is over all.”

“High words off an empty stomach, my man, so you can just keep them to cool your parridge. But oh dear! oh dear! You’ll forget your puir auld Jane Callender, anyway.”

“Never, auntie!”

“Tut! don’t tell me.”

“Never!”

“It’s the last I’m to see of you, laddie. I’m knowing that fine . . . and me that fond of you too, and looking on you as my ain son.”

“Come, auntie, come; you mustn’t take it so seriously.”

“And to think a bit thing like that can make all this botherment!”

“Nay, it’s my own doing—absolutely mine.”

“Aye, aye! man’s the head, but woman turns it.”

They dined together and then got into the carriage for Soho. John talked continually, with an impetuous rush of enthusiasm; but the old lady sat in gloomy silence, broken only by a sigh. At the corner of Downing Street he got out to call on the Prime Minister, and sent the carriage on to the clergy-house.

A newsboy going down Whitehall was calling an evening paper. John bought a copy, and the first thing his eye fell upon was the mention of his own name. “The

announcement in another column that Father Storm of Soho intends to take up the work which the heroic Father Damien has just laid down will be received by the public with mingled joy and regret—joy at the splendid heroism which prompts so noble a resolve, regret at the loss which the Church in London will sustain by the removal of a clergyman of so much courage, devotion, independence, and self-sacrifice. . . . That the son of a peer and heir to an earldom should voluntarily take up a life of poverty in Soho, one of the most crowded, criminal, and neglected corners of Christendom, was a fact of so much significance——”

John Storm crushed the paper in his hand and threw it into the street; but a few minutes afterwards he saw another copy of it in the hands of the Prime Minister as he came to the door of the Cabinet-room to greet him. The old man's face looked soft, and his voice had a faint tremor.

“I'm afraid you are bringing me bad news, John.”

John laughed noisily. “Do I look like it, uncle? Bad news, indeed! No, but the best news in the world.”

“What is it, my boy?”

“I'm about to be married. You've often told me I ought to be, and now I'm going to act on your advice.”

The bleak old face was smiling. “Then the rumour I see in the papers isn't true, after all?”

“Oh, yes, it's true enough, and my wife is to go with me.”

“But have you considered that carefully? Isn't it a terrible demand to make of any woman? Women are more religious than men, but they are more material also. Under the heat of religious impulse a woman is capable of sacrifices—great sacrifices—but when it has cooled——”

"No fear of that, uncle," said John; and then he told the Prime Minister what he had told Mrs. Callender—that it was Glory's proposal that they should leave London, and that without this suggestion he might not have thought of his present enterprise. The bleak face kept smiling, but the Prime Minister was asking himself, "What does this mean? Has she *her own* reasons for wishing to go away?"

"Do you know, my boy, that, with all this talk, you've not yet told me who she is?"

John told him, and then a faint and far-off rumour out of another world seemed to flit across his memory.

"An actress at present, you say?"

"So to speak, but ready to give up everything for this glorious mission."

"Very brave, no doubt, very beautiful; but what of your present responsibilities—your responsibilities in London?"

"That's just what I came to speak about," said John; and then his rapturous face straightened, and he made some effort to plunge into the practical aspect of his affairs at Soho. There was his club for girls and his home for children. They were to be turned out of the clergy-house to-morrow, and he had taken a shelter at Westminster. But the means to support them were still deficient, and if there was anything coming to him that would suffice for that purpose . . . if there was enough left . . . if his mother's money was not all gone—

The Prime Minister was looking into John's face, watching the play of his features, but hardly listening to what he said. "What does this mean?" he was asking himself, in the old habitual way of the man whose business it is to read the motives that are not revealed.

"So you are willing to leave London after all, John?"

"Why not, uncle? London is nothing to me in itself, less than nothing, and if that brave girl to whom it is everything——"

"And yet six months ago I gave you the opportunity of doing so, and then——"

"Then my head was full of dreams, sir. Thank God they are gone now, and I am awake at last."

"But the Church—I thought your duty and devotion to the Church——"

"The Church is a chaos, uncle, a wreck of fragments without unity, principle, or life. No man can find foothold in it now without accommodating his duty and his loyalty to his chances of a livelihood. It is a career, not a crusade. Once I imagined that a man might live as a protest against all this, but it was a dream, a vain and presumptuous dream."

"And then your woman movement——"

"Another dream, uncle! A whole standing army marshalled and equipped to do battle against the world's sins toward woman could never hope for victory. Why? Because the enemy is ourselves, and only God can contend against a foe like that. He will, too! For the wrongs inflicted on woman by this wicked and immoral London, God will visit it with his vengeance yet. I see it coming, it is not far off, and God help those——"

"But surely, my boy, surely it is not necessary to fly away from the world in order to escape from your dreams? Just when it is going to be good to you, too. It was kicking and cuffing and laughing at you only yesterday——"

"And to-morrow it would kick and cuff and laugh at me again. Oh, it is a cowardly and contemptible world, uncle, and happy is the man who wants nothing of it!

He is its master, its absolute master, and everybody else is its wretched slave. Think of the people who are scrambling for fame and titles and decorations and invitations to Court! They'll all be in their six feet by two feet some day. And then think of the rich men who hire detectives to watch over their children lest they should be stolen for sake of a ransom, while they themselves, like human mill-horses, go tramping round and round the safes which contain their securities! Oh, miserable delusion, to think that because a nation is rich it is therefore great! Once I thought the Church was the refuge from this worst of the spiritual dangers of the age, and so it would have been if it had been built on the Gospel. But it isn't; it loves the thrones of the world and bows down to the golden calf. Poverty! Give me poverty and let me renounce everything. Jesus, our blessed Jesus, He knew well what He was doing in choosing to be poor, and even as a man He was the greatest being that ever trod upon the earth."

"But this leper island mission is not poverty merely, my dear John—it is death, certain death, sooner or later, and God knows what news the next mail may bring us."

"As to that, I feel I am in God's hands, sir, and He knows best what is good for us. People talk about dying before their time, but no man ever did or ever will or ever can do so, and it is blasphemy to think of it. Then which of us can prolong our lives by one day or hour or minute? But God can do everything. And what a grand inspiration to trust yourself absolutely to Him, to raise the arms heavenward, which the world would pinion to your side, and cry, 'Do with me as Thou wilt; I am ready for anything—anything.'"

A tremor passed over the wrinkles about the old man's

eyes, and he thought, "All this is self-deception. He doesn't believe a word of it. Poor boy! his heart alone is leading him, and he is the worst slave of us all."

Then he said aloud, "Things haven't fallen out as I expected, John, and I am sorry, very sorry. The laws of life and the laws of love don't always run together—I know that quite well."

John flinched, but made no protest.

"I shall feel as if I were losing your mother a second time when you leave me, my boy. To tell you the truth, I've been watching you and thinking of you, though you haven't known it. And you've rather neglected the old man. I thought you might bring your wife to me some day, and that I might live to see your children. But that's all over now, and there seems to be no help for it . . . They say the most noble and beautiful things in the world are done in a state of fever, and perhaps this fever of yours . . . H'm! . . . As for the money, it is ready for you at any time."

"There can't be much left, uncle. I have gone through most of it."

"No, John, no; the money you spent was my money—your own is still untouched."

"You are too good, uncle, and if I had once thought you wished to see more of me——"

"Ah, I know, I know! It was a wise man who said it was hard to love a woman and do anything else, even to love God Himself."

John dropped his head and turned to go.

"But come again before you leave London—if you do leave it—and now good-bye and God bless you!"

The news of John Storm's intention to follow Father Damien had touched and thrilled the heart of London,

and the streets and courts about St. Mary Magdalene's were thronged with people. In their eyes he was about to fulfil a glorious mission, and ought to be encouraged and sustained. "Good-bye, Father!" cried one. "God bless you!" cried another. A young woman with timid eyes stretched out her hand to him, and then everybody attempted to do the same. He tried to answer cheerfully, but was conscious that his throat was thick and his voice was husky. Mrs. Pincher was at the door of the clergy-house, crying openly and wiping her eyes. "Ain't there lepers enough in London, sir, without goin' to the ends of the earth for 'em?" He laughed and made an effort to answer her humorously, but for some reason both words and ideas failed him.

The club-room was crowded, and among the girls and Sisters there were several strange faces. Mrs. Calender sat at one end of the little platform, and she was glowering across at the other end, where the Father Superior stood in his black cassock, quiet and watchful, and with the sprawling, smiling face of Brother Andrew by his side. The girls were singing when John entered, and their voices swelled out as they saw him pushing his way through. When the hymn ended there was silence for a moment, as if it was expected that he would speak, but he did not rise, and the lady at the harmonium began again. Some of the young mothers from the Shelter above had brought down their little ones, and the thin, tuneless voices could be heard among the rest—

"There's a Friend for little children
Above the bright blue sky."

John had made a brave fight for it, but was beginning to break down. Everybody else had risen; he could not rise. An expression of fear and at the same time of

shame, had come into his face. Vaguely, half-consciously, half-reproachfully, he began to review the situation. After all, he was deserting his post, he was running away. This was his true scene, his true work, and if he turned his back upon it he would be pursued by eternal regrets. And yet he must go, he must leave everything—that alone he understood and felt.

All at once, God knows why, he began to think of something which had happened when he was a boy. With his father he was crossing the Duddon Sands. The tide was out, far out, but it had turned; it was galloping towards them, and they could hear the champing waves on the beach behind. "Run, boy, run! Give me your hand and run!"

Then he resumed the current of his former thoughts. "What was I thinking about?" he asked himself; and when he remembered, he thought, "I will give my hand to the Heavenly Father and go on without fear." At the second verse he rallied, rose to his feet, and joined in the singing. It was said afterwards that his deep voice rang out above all the other voices, and that he sang in rapid and irregular time, going faster and faster at every line.

They had reached the last verse but one when he saw a young girl crushing her way towards him with a letter. She was smiling, and seemed proud to render him this service. He was about to lay the letter aside when he glanced at it, and then he could not put it down. It was marked "Urgent," and the address was in Glory's handwriting. The champing waves were in his ears again. They were coming on and on.

A presentiment of evil crept over him, and he opened the letter and read it. Then his life fell to wreck in a moment. Its nullity, its hopelessness, its futility, its folly,

the world with its elusive joys, love with its deceptions so cruel and so sweet, all, all came sweeping up on him like the sea-wrack out of a storm. In an instant the truth appeared to him, and he understood himself at last. For Glory's sake he had sacrificed everything, and deceived himself before God and man. And yet she had failed him and forsaken him, and slipped out of his hands in the end. The tide had overtaken and surrounded him, and the voices of the girls and the children were like the roar of the waters in his ears.

But what was this? Why had they stopped singing? All at once he became aware that everybody else was seated, and that he was standing alone on the edge of the platform with Glory's letter in his hand.

"Hush! hush!" There was a strained silence, and he tried to recollect what it was that he was expected to do. Every eye was on his face. Some of the strangers opened note-books and sat ready to write. Then, coming to himself, he understood what was before him, and tried to control his voice and begin.

"Girls," he said; but he was hardly able to speak or breathe. "Girls," he said again; but his strong voice shook, and he tried in vain to go on.

One of the girls began to sob. Then another and another. It was said afterwards that nobody could look on his drawn face, so hopeless, so full of the traces of suffering and bitter sadness, without wanting to cry aloud. But he controlled himself at length.

"My good friends all, you came to-night to bid me God-speed on a long journey, and I came to bid you farewell. But there is a higher Power that rules our actions, and it is little we know of our own future or our fate or ourselves. God bids me tell you that my leper

island is to be London, and that my work among you is not done yet."

After saying this he stood a moment as if intending to say more, but he said nothing. The letter crinkled in his fingers; he looked at it, an expression of helplessness came in his face, and he sat down. And then the Father came up to him and sat beside him, and took his hand and comforted it as if he had been a little child.

There was another attempt to sing, but the hymn made no headway this time, for some of the girls were crying, they hardly knew why, and others were whispering, and the strangers were leaving the room. Two ladies were going down the stairs.

"I felt sure he wouldn't go," said one.

"Why so?" said the other.

"I can't tell you. I had my private reasons."

It was Rosa Macquarrie. Going down the dark lane she came upon a woman who had haunted the outside of the building during the past half-hour, apparently thinking at one moment of entering and at the next of going away. The woman hurriedly lowered her veil as Rosa approached her, but she was too late to avoid recognition.

"Glory! Is it you?"

Glory covered her face with her hands and sobbed.

"Whatever are you doing here?"

"Don't ask me, Rosa. Oh, I'm a lost woman! Lord forgive me! what have I done?"

"My poor child!"

"Take me home, Rosa; and don't leave me to-night, dear—not to-night, Rosa."

And Rosa took her by the arm and led her back to Clement's Inn.

Next morning before daybreak the brothers of the Society of the Holy Gethsemane had gathered in their church in Bishopsgate Street for Lauds and Prime. Only the chancel was lighted up, the rest of the church was dark, but the first gleams of dawn were now struggling through the eastern window against the candle-light on the altar and the gas-light on the choir.

John Storm was standing on the altar steps, and the Father was by his side. He was wearing the cassock of the Brotherhood, and the cord with the three knots was bound about his waist. All was silent round about, the city was still asleep, the current of life had not yet awakened for the day. Lauds and Prime were over, the brothers were on their knees, and the Father was reading the last words of the dedication service.

“Amen! Amen!”

There was a stroke of the bell overhead, a door somewhere was loudly slammed, and then the organ began to play—

“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty.”

The brothers rose and sang, their voices filled the dark place, and the quivering sounds of the organ swelled up to the unseen roof.

“Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty,
God in Three Persons, Blessèd Trinity!”

The Father’s cheeks were moist, but his eyes were shining and his face was full of a great joy. John Storm was standing with bowed head. He had made the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and surrendered his life to God.

FOURTH BOOK.—SANCTUARY.

I.

Six months passed, and a panic terror had seized London. It was one of those epidemic frenzies which have fallen upon great cities in former ages of the world. The public mind was filled with the idea that London was threatened with a serious danger, that it was verging on an awful crisis, that it was about to be destroyed.

The signs were such as have usually been considered preparatory to the Second Coming of the Messiah—a shock of earthquake, which threw down a tottering chimney (somewhere in Soho), and the expected appearance of a comet. But this was not to be the second Advent: it was to be a disaster confined to London.

God was about to punish London for its sins. The dishonour lay at its door of being the wickedest city in the world. Side by side with the developments of mechanical science, lifting men to the power and position of angels, there was a moral degeneration degrading them to the level of beasts. With an apparent aspiration after social and humanitarian reform, there was a corruption of the public conscience and a hardening of the public heart. London was the living picture of this startling contrast. Impiety, iniquity, impurity, and injustice were at their height here, and either England must forfeit her position among the nations or the Almighty would inter-

pose. The Almighty was about to interpose, and the consummation of London's wickedness was near.

By what means the destruction of London would come to pass was a matter on which there were many theories, and the fear and consternation of the people took various shapes. One of them was that of a mighty earthquake, in which the dome of St. Paul's was to totter, and the towers of Westminster Abbey to rock and fall amid clouds of dust. Another was that of an avenging fire, in which the great city was to light up the whole face of Europe and burn to ashes, as a witness of God's wrath at the sins of men. A third was that of a flood, in which the Thames was to rise and submerge the city, and tens of thousands of houses and hundreds of thousands of persons were to be washed away and destroyed.

Concerning the time of the event the popular imagination had attained to a more definite idea. It was to occur on the great day of the Epsom races. Derby-day was the national day. More than any day associated with political independence, or with victory in battle, or yet with religious sanctity, the day devoted to sport and gambling and intemperance and immorality was England's day. Therefore the Almighty had selected that day for the awful revelation by which He would make His power known to man.

Thus the heart of London was once more stormed, and shame and panic ran through it like an epidemic. The consequences were the usual ones. In vain the newspapers published articles in derision of the madness, with accounts of similar frenzies which had laid hold of London before. There was a run on the banks, men sold their businesses, dissolved their partnerships, transferred their stocks, and removed to houses outside the suburbs.

Great losses were sustained in all ranks of society, and the only class known to escape were the Jews on the Exchange, who held their peace and profited by their infidelity.

When people asked themselves who the author and origin of the panic was, they thought instantly, and with one accord, of a dark-eyed lonely man, who walked the streets of London in the black cassock of a monk, with the cord and three knots which were the witness of life vows. No dress could have shown to better advantage his dark-brown face and tall figure. Something majestic seemed to hang about the man. His big lustrous eyes, his faint smile with its sad expression always behind it, his silence, his reserve, his burning eloquence when he preached, seemed to lay siege to the imagination of the populace, and especially to take hold, as with a fiery grip, of the impassioned souls of women.

A certain mystery about his life did much to help this extraordinary fascination. When London as a whole became conscious of him, it was understood that he was in some sort a nobleman as well as a priest, and had renounced the pleasures and possessions of the world and given up all for God. His life was devoted to the poor and outcast, especially to the Magdalenes and their unhappy children. Although a detached monk still, and living in obedience to the rule of one of the monastic brotherhoods of the Anglican Church, he was also vicar of a parish in Westminster. His church was a centre of religious life in that abandoned district, having no fewer than thirty parochial organisations connected with it, including guilds, clubs, temperance societies, savings-banks, and, above all, shelters and orphanages for the girls and their little ones who were the vicar's especial care.

His chief helpers were a company of devoted women, drawn mainly from the fashionable fringe which skirted his squalid district, and banded together as a sisterhood. For clerical help he depended entirely on the brothers of his Society, and the money saved by these voluntary agencies he distributed among the poor, the sick, and the unfortunate. Money of his own he had none, and his purse was always empty by reason of his free-handedness. Rumour spoke of a fortune of many thousands which had been spent wholly on others, in the building or maintenance of school and hospital, shelter and refuge. He lived a life of more than Christian simplicity, and was seen to treat himself with constant disregard of comfort and convenience. His only home was two rooms (formerly assigned to the choir) on the ground-floor under his church, and it was understood that he slept on a hospital-bed wrapped in the cloak which in winter he wore over his cassock. His personal servant in these cell-like quarters was a lay brother from his Society,—a big, ungainly boy, with sprawling features,—who served him, and loved him, and looked up to him with the devotion of a dog. A dog of other kind he had also—a bloodhound, whose affection for him was a terror to all who awakened its jealousy or provoked its master's wrath. People said he had learnt renunciation, and was the most Christ-like man they had ever known. He was called "The Father."

Such was the man with whom the popular imagination associated the idea of the panic, but what specific ground there was for laying upon him the responsibility of the precise predictions which led to it none could rightly say. It was remembered afterwards that every new folly had been ascribed to him. "The Father says so and so," or "The Father says such and such will come to pass," and

then came prophecies which were the remotest from his thoughts. No matter how wild or extravagant the assertion, if it was laid upon him there were people ready to believe it, so deep was the impression made on the public mind by this priest in the black cassock, with the bloodhound at his heels, so strong was the assurance that he was a man with the breath of God in him.

What was known with certainty was that the Father preached against the impurities and injustices of the age with a vehemence never heard before, and that when he spoke of the wickedness of the world towards woman, of the temptations that were laid before her,—temptations of dress, of luxury, of false work and false fame,—and then of the cruel neglect and abandonment of woman when her summer had gone and her winter had come, his lips seemed to be touched as by a live coal from the altar, and his eyes to blaze as with Pentecostal fire. Cities and nations which countenanced and upheld such corruptions of a false civilisation would be overtaken by the judgment of God. That judgment was near, it was imminent, and but for the many instances in which the life of the rich, the great, and the powerful was redeemed by the highest virtue, this pitiful farce of a national existence would have been played out already,—but for the good men still found in Sodom the city of abominations must long since have been destroyed. People there were to laugh at these predictions, but they were only throwing cold water on lime, the more they did so the more it smoked.

Little by little a supernatural atmosphere gathered about the Father as a man sent from God. One day he visited a child who was sick with a bad mouth, and, touching the child's mouth, he said, "It will be well soon."

The child recovered immediately, and the idea was started that he was a healer. People waited for him that they might touch his hand. Sometimes after service he had to stand half-an-hour while the congregation filed past him. Hard-headed persons, sane and sane in other relations of life, were heard to protest that on shaking hands with him an electric current passed through them. Sick people declared themselves cured by the sight of him, and charlatans sold handkerchiefs on pretence that he had blessed them. He repeatedly protested that it was not necessary to touch or even to see him. "Your faith alone can make you whole." But the frenzy increased, the people crowded upon him, and he was followed through the streets for his blessing.

Somebody discovered that he was born on the 25th of December, and was just thirty-three years of age. Then the madness reached its height. A certain resemblance was observed in his face and head to the traditional head and face of Christ, and it was the humour of the populace to discover some mystical relations between him and the Divine figure. Hysterical women kissed his hand, and even hailed him as their Saviour. He protested and remonstrated, but all to no purpose. The delusion grew, and his protestations helped it.

As the day approached that was to be big with the fate of London, his church, which had been crowded before, was now besieged. He was understood to preach the hope that in the calamity to befall the city a remnant would be saved, as Israel was saved from the plagues of Egypt. Thousands who were too poor to leave London had determined to spend the night of the fateful day in the open air, and already they were going out into the fields and the parks, to Hampstead, Highgate, and Black-

heath. The panic was becoming terrible, and the newspapers were calling upon the authorities to intervene. A danger to the public peace was threatened, and the man who was chiefly to blame for it should be dealt with at once. No matter that he was innocent of active sedition, no matter that he was living a life devoted to religious and humanitarian reforms, no matter that his vivid faith, his trust in God, and his obedience to the Divine will were like a light shining in a dark place, no matter that he was not guilty of the wild extravagance of the predictions of his followers,—“the Father” was a peril, he was a panic-maker, and he should be arrested and restrained.

The morning of Derby-day broke grey and dull and close. It was one of those mornings in summer which portend a thunderstorm and great heat. In that atmosphere London awoke to two great fevers—the fever of superstitious fear and the fever of gambling and sport.

II.

BUT London is a monster with many hearts; it is capable of various emotions, and even at that feverish time it was at the full tide of a sensation of a different kind entirely. This was a new play and a new player. The play was “risky”; it was understood to present the fallen woman in her naked reality, and not as a soiled dove or sentimental plaything. The player was the actress who performed this part. She was new to the stage, and little was known of her, but it was whispered that she had something in common with the character she personated. Her success had been instantaneous: her photograph was in the shop-windows; it had been reproduced in the illustrated papers; she had sat to famous artists, and her portrait in oils was on the line at Burlington House.

The play was the latest work of the Scandinavian dramatist, the actress was Glory Quayle.

At nine o'clock on the morning of Derby-day Glory was waiting in the drawing-room of the Garden House, dressed in a magnificent outdoor costume of pale grey, which seemed to wave like a ripe hayfield. She looked paler and more nervous than before, and sometimes she glanced at the clock on the mantelpiece, and sometimes looked away in the distance before her while she drew on her long white gloves and buttoned them. Rosa Macquarrie came upstairs hurriedly. She was smartly dressed in black with red roses, and looked bright and brisk and happy.

"He has sent Benson with the carriage to ask us to drive down," said Rosa. "Must have some engagement surely. Let us be off, dear. No time to lose."

"Shall I go, I wonder?" said Glory with a strange gravity.

"Indeed yes, dear. Why not? You've not been in good spirits lately and it will do you good. Besides, you deserve a holiday after a six months' season. And then it's such a great day for *him* too——"

"Very well, I'll go," said Glory, and at that moment a twitch of her nervous fingers broke a button of one of the gloves. She drew it off, threw both gloves on to a side-table, took up another pair that lay there and followed Rosa down the stairs. An open carriage was waiting for them in the outer court of the Inn, and ten minutes afterwards they drew up in a narrow street off Whitehall, under a wide archway which opened into the large and silent quadrangle leading to the principal public offices. It was the Home Office; the carriage had come for Drake.

Drake had seen changes in his life too. His father was dead and he had succeeded to the baronetcy. He had also inherited a racing establishment which the family had long upheld, and a colt which had been entered for the Derby nearly three years ago was to run in the race that day. Its name was Ellan Vannin, and it was not a favourite. Notwithstanding the change in his fortunes, Drake still held his position of private secretary to the Secretary of State, but it was understood that he was shortly to enter public life under the wing of the Government, and to stand for the first constituency that became vacant. Ministers predicted a career for him; there was nothing he might not aspire to, and hardly anything he might not do.

Parliament had adjourned in honour of the day on which the "Isthmian games" were celebrated, and the Home Secretary, as leader of the Lower House, had said that horse-racing was "a noble and distinguished sport deserving of a national holiday." But the Minister himself, and consequently his secretary, had been compelled to put in an appearance at their office for all that. There was urgent business demanding prompt attention.

In the large green room of the Home Office overlooking the empty quadrangle, the Minister, dressed in a paddock coat, received a deputation of six clergymen. It included Archdeacon Wealthy, who served as its spokesman. In a rotund voice, strutting a step and swinging his glasses, the Archdeacon stated their case. They had come, most reluctantly and with a sense of pain and grief and humiliation, to make representations about a brother clergyman. It was the notorious Mr. Storm—"Father" Storm, for he was drawing the people into the Roman obedience. The man was bringing religion into ridicule

and contempt, and it was the duty of all who loved their mother Church——

"Pardon me, Mr. Archdeacon, we have nothing to do with that," said the Minister. "You should go to your Bishop. Surely he is the proper person——"

"We've been, sir," said the Archdeacon, and then followed an explanation of the Bishop's powerlessness. The Church provided no funds to protect a Bishop from legal proceedings in inhibiting a vicar guilty of this ridiculous kind of conduct. "But the man comes within the power of the secular authorities, sir. He is constantly inciting people to assemble unlawfully to the danger of the public peace."

"How? How?"

"Well, he is a fanatic, a lunatic, and has put out monstrous and ridiculous predictions about the destruction of London, causing disorderly crowds to assemble about his church. The thoroughfares are blocked, and people are pushed about and assaulted. Indeed, things have come to such a pass that now . . . to-day——"

"Pardon me again, Mr. Archdeacon, but this seems to be a simple matter for the police. Why didn't you go to the Commissioner at Scotland Yard?"

"We did, sir; but he said—you will hardly believe it, but he actually affirmed—that as the man had been guilty of no overt act of sedition——"

"Precisely; that would be my view too."

"And are we, sir, to wait for a riot, for death, for murder, before the law can be put in motion? Is there no precedent for proceeding before anything serious . . . I may say alarming——"

"Well, gentlemen," said the Minister, glancing impatiently at his watch, "I can only promise you that the

matter shall have proper attention. The Commissioner shall be seen, and if a summons——”

“It is too late for that now, sir. The man is a dangerous madman, and should be arrested and put under restraint.”

“I confess I don’t quite see what he has done, but if——”

The Archdeacon drew himself up. “Because a clergyman is well connected—has high official connections indeed . . . But surely it is better that one man should be put under control, whoever he is, than that the whole Church and nation should be endangered and disgraced.”

“Ah . . . H’m! . . . H’m! I think I’ve heard that sentiment before somewhere, Mr. Archdeacon. But I’ll not detain you now. If a warrant is necessary . . .” and with vague promises and plausible speeches the Minister bowed the deputation out of the room. Then he pished and pshawed, swung a field-glass across his shoulder and prepared to leave for the day.

“Confound them! How these Christians love each other! I leave it with you, Drake. When the matter was mentioned at Downing Street the Prime Minister told us to act without regard to his interest in the young priest. If there’s likely to be a riot let the Commissioner get his warrant . . . Heigho! Ten thirty! I’m off! Good-day!”

Some minutes afterwards Drake himself, having written to Scotland Yard, followed his chief down the private staircase to the quadrangle, where Glory and Rosa were waiting in the carriage under the arch.

In honour of the event in which his horse was to play a part Drake had engaged a coach to take a party of friends to the Downs. They assembled at a hotel in

the Buckingham Palace Road. Lord Robert was there, dressed in the latest fashion, with boots of approved Parisian shape and a necktie of crying colours. Betty Bellman was with him, in a red and white dress and a large red hat. There was a lady in pale green with a light bonnet, another in grey and white, and another in brightest blue. They were a large, smart, and even gorgeous company, chiefly theatrical. Before eleven o'clock they were spinning along the Kennington Road on their way to Epsom.

Drake himself drove, and Glory occupied the seat of honour by his side. She was looking brighter now, and was smiling and laughing and making little sallies in response to her companion's talk. He was telling her all about the carnival. The Derby was the greatest race the world over. It was run for about six thousand sovereigns, but the total turn-over of the meeting was probably a million of money. Thus, on its business side alone, it was a great national enterprise, and the Puritans who would abolish it ought to think of that. A racehorse cost about three hundred a year to keep; but, of course, nobody maintained his racing establishment on his winnings. Nearly everybody had to bet, and gambling was not so great an offence as some people supposed. The whole trade of the world was of the nature of a gamble, life itself was a gamble, and the racecourse was the only market in the world where no man could afford to go bankrupt or be a defaulter and refuse to pay.

They were now going by Clapham Common with an unbroken stream of vehicles of every sort—coaches with outriders, landaus, hansom cabs, omnibuses, costers' spring-carts and barrows. Every coach carried its horn, and every horn was blown at the approach to every vil-

lage. The sun was hot, and the roads were rising to the horses' fetlocks in dust. Drake was pointing out some of their travelling companions. That large coach going by at a furious gallop was the coach of the Army and Navy Club; that barouche with its pair of greys and its postilion belonged to a well-known wine merchant; that carriage, with its couple of leaders worth hundreds apiece, was the property of a prosperous publican; that was the coach which usually ran between Northumberland Avenue and Virginia Water, and its seats were let out at so much apiece, usually to clerks who practised innocent frauds to escape from the City; those soldiers on the omnibus were from Wellington Barracks on "Derby leave;" and those jolly tars with their sweethearts, packed like herrings in a car, were the only true sportsmen on the road, and probably hadn't the price of a glass of rum on any race of the day. Going by road to the Derby was almost a thing of the past, smart people didn't often do it, but it was the best fun anyway, and many an old sport tooled his team on the road still.

Glory grew brighter at every mile they covered. Everything pleased or amused or astonished her. With the charm born of a vivid interest in life she radiated happiness over all the company. Some glimpses of the country girl came back, her soul thrilled to the beauty of the world around, and she cried out like a child at sight of the chestnut and red hawthorn, and at the scent of spring with which the air was laden. From time to time she was recognised on the road, people raised their hats to her, and Drake made no disguise of his beaming pride. He leaned back to Rosa, who was sitting on the seat behind, and whispered, "Like herself to-day, isn't she?"

"Why shouldn't she be, with all the world at her feet and her future on the knees of the gods?" said Rosa.

But a shade of sadness came over Glory's face, as if the gay world and its amusements had not altogether filled a void that was left somewhere in her heart. They were drawing up to water the horses at the old "Cock" at Sutton, and a brown-faced woman, with big silver earrings and a monster hat and feather, came up to the coach to tell the "quality" their fortunes.

"Oh, let us, Glo," cried Betty. "I'd love it of all things, doncher know!"

The gipsy had held out her hand to Glory. "Let me look at your palm, pretty lady."

"Am I to cross it with silver first?"

"Thank you kindly. But must I tell you the truth, lady?"

"Why, yes, mother. Why not?"

"Then you're going to lose money to-day, lady; but never mind, you shall be fortunate in the end, and the one you love shall be yours."

"That's all right," cried the gentlemen in chorus.

The ladies tittered, and Glory turned to Drake and said, "A pair of gloves against Ellan Vannin."

"Done!" said Drake, and there was general laughter.

The gipsy still held Glory's hand, and, looking up at Drake out of the corner of her eyes, she said, "I won't tell you what colour he is, pretty lady; but he is young and tall, and though he is a gorgio he is the kind a Romany girl would die for. Much trouble you'll have with him, and because of his foolishness and your own unkindness you'll put seven score miles between you. You like to live your life, lady, and as men drown their sorrows in drink so do you drown yours in pleasure.

But it will all come right at last, lady, and those who envy and hate you now will kiss the ground you walk on."

"Glo," said Betty, "I'm surprised at ye, dearest, listenin' to such clipperty clapper."

Glory did not recover her composure after this incident until they came near the Downs. Meantime the grooms had blown their horns at many villages hidden in the verdure of charming hollows, and the coaches had overtaken the people who had left London earlier in the day to make the journey afoot. Boy tramps looking tired already—"Wish ye luck, gentlemen"—fat sailors and mutilated colliers playing organs—"Twas in Trafalgar Bay" and "Come whoam to thee childer and me"—tatterdemalions selling the "C'rect Card—on'y fourpence and I've slep' out on the Downs last night, s'elp me"—and all the ragged army of the maimed and the miserable who hang on the edge of a carnival.

Among this wreckage as they skimmed over it on the coach there was one figure more grotesque than the rest, a Polish Jew in his long kaftan and his worn sabbath hat, going along alone, triddle-traddle, in his slippers without heels. Lord Robert was at the moment teasing Betty into a pet by christening her "The Elephant" in allusion to her stoutness. But somebody called his attention to the Jew, and he screwed his glass to his eye, and cried, "Father Storm, by Jove!"

The nickname was taken up by other people on the coach, and also by people on other coaches, and "Father Storm!" was thrown at the poor scarecrow as a missile from twenty quarters at once. Glory's colour was rising to her ears, and Drake was humming a tune to cover her confusion. But Betty was asking "Who was Father Storm, if you please?" and Lord Robert was saying, "Bless my

stars, this is something new, don't you know! Here's somebody who doesn't know Father Storm! Father Storm, my dear Elephant, is the prophet, the modern Jonah who predicts that Nineveh, that is to say London, is to be destroyed this very day!"

"He must be balmy," said Betty, and the lady in blue went into fits of laughter.

"Yes," said Lord Robert, "and all because wicked men like ourselves insist on enjoying ourselves on a day like this with pretty people like you."

"Well, he *is* a cough-drop!" said Betty. The lady in blue asked what was "balmy" and a "cough-drop," and Lord Robert said—

"Betty means that the good father is crazy . . . silly . . . stupid . . . cracked in the head, in short——"

But Glory could bear no more. It was an insult to John Storm to be sat upon in judgment by such a woman. With a fiery jet of temper she turned about and said, "Pity there are not more heads cracked, then, if it would only let a little of the light of heaven into them."

"Oh, if it's like that . . ." began Betty, looking round significantly, and Lord Robert said, "It *is* like that, dear Elephant, and if our charming hurricane will pardon me, I'm not surprised that the man has broken out as a Messiah, and if the authorities don't intervene——"

"Hold your tongue, Robert," cried Drake. "Listen, everybody!"

They were climbing on to the Downs, and could hear the deep hum of the people on the course. "My!" said Betty. "Well!" said the lady in blue. "It's like a beehive with the lid off," said Glory.

As they passed the railway station the people who had come by train poured into the road, and the coach

had to slow down. "They must have come from the four winds of heaven," said Glory.

"Wait, only wait," said Drake.

Some minutes afterwards everybody drew breath. They were on the top of the common, and had a full view of the course. It was a vast sea of human beings stretching as far as the eye could reach—a black moving ocean without a glimpse of soil or grass. The race-track itself was a river of people; the grand stand, tier on tier, was black from its lawns at the bottom to its sloping gallery on top, and the "hill" opposite was a rocky coast of carriages, booths, carts, and clustering crowds. Glory's eyes seemed to leap out of her head. "It's a nation!" she said with panting breath. "An empire!"

They were diving into these breaking, plashing, plunging waters of human life with their multitudinous voices of laughter and speech, and Glory was looking at a dark figure in the hollow below which seemed to stand up above the rest, when Drake cried.

"Sit hard everybody! We'll take the hill at a gallop."

Then to the crack of the whip, the whoop of the driver, and the blast of the horn, the horses flew down like the wind. Betty screamed, Rosa groaned, and Glory laughed and looked up at Drake in her delight. When the coach drew up on the other side of the hollow, the bell was ringing at the grand stand as signal for another race, and the dark figure had disappeared.

III.

THAT morning when John Storm went to take seven-o'clock celebration, the knocker-up with his long stick had not yet finished his rounds in the courts and alleys about the church, but the costers with their barrows and donkeys,

their wives and their children, were making an early start for Epsom. There were many communicants, and it was eight o'clock before he returned to his rooms. By that time the postman had made his first delivery, and there was a letter from the Prime Minister. "Come to Downing Street as soon as this reaches you. I must see you immediately."

He ate his breakfast of milk and brown bread, said, "Good-bye, Brother Andrew; I shall be back for evening service," whistled to the dog and set out into the streets. But a sort of superstitious fear had taken hold of him, as if an event of supreme importance in his life was impending, and before answering his uncle's summons he made a round of the buildings in the vicinity which were devoted to the work of his mission. His first visit was to the school. The children had assembled, and they were being marshalled in order by the Sisters, and prepared for their hymn and prayer.

"Good-morning, Father."

"Good-morning, children."

Many of them had presents for him, one a flower, another a biscuit, another a marble, and yet another an old Christmas card. "God bless them, and protect them," he thought, and he left the school with a full heart.

His last visit was to the men's shelter, which he had established under the management of his former "organ-man," Mr. Jupe. It was a bare place, a shed which had been a stable and was now floored and ceiled. Beds resembling the bunks in the foc's'le of a ship lined the walls. When these were full the lodgers lay on the ground. A blanket only was provided. The men slept in their clothes, but rolled up their coats for pillows. There was a stove where they might cook their food if they had

money to buy any. A ha'porth of tea and sugar mixed, a ha'porth of bread and a ha'porth of butter made a royal feast.

Going through the square in which his church stood he passed a smart gig at the door of a public-house that occupied the corner of a street. The publican in holiday clothes was stepping up to the driver's seat, and a young soldier, smoking a cigarette, was taking the place by his side. "Morning, Father, can you tip us the winner?" said the publican with a grin, while the soldier, with an impudent smile cried "Ta-ta" over his shoulder to the second storey of a tenement house where a young woman with a bloated and serious face and a head mopped up in curl-papers was looking down from an open window.

It was nine o'clock when John Storm reached the Prime Minister's house. A small crowd of people had followed him to the door. "His Lordship is waiting for you in the garden, sir," said the footman, and John was conducted to the back.

In the little shady enclosure between Downing Street and the Horse Guards Parade the Prime Minister was pacing to and fro. His head was bent, his step was heavy, he looked harassed and depressed. At sight of John's monkish habit he started with surprise and faltered uneasily. But presently sitting by John's side on a seat under a tree, and keeping his eyes away from him, he resumed their old relations and said—

"I sent for you, my boy, to warn you and counsel you. You must give up this crusade. It is a public danger, and God knows what harm may come of it. Don't suppose I do not sympathise with you. I do to a certain extent. And don't think I charge you with all the follies of this ridiculous distemper. I have followed you and watched

you, and I know that ninety-nine hundredths of this madness is not yours. But in the eye of the public you are responsible for the whole of it, and that is the way of the world always. Enthusiasm is a good thing, my boy; it is the rainbow in the heaven of youth, but it may go too far. It may be hurtful to the man who nourishes it and dangerous to society. The world classes it with lunacy and love and so forth, among the nervous accidents of life, and the humdrum healthy-minded herd always call that man a fool and a weakling, or else a fanatic and a madman, in whom the grand errors of human nature are due to an effort—may I not say a vain effort?—to live up to a great ideal.”

There were nervous twitchings over the muscles of John’s face.

“Come, now, come, for the sake of peace and tranquillity, lest there should be disorder and even death, let this matter rest. Think, my boy, think, we are as much concerned for the world’s welfare as you can be, and we have higher claims and heavier responsibilities. *I* cannot raise a hand to help you, John. In the nature of things *I* cannot defend you. I sent for you because . . . because you are your mother’s son. Don’t cast on me a heavier burden than I can bear. Save yourself and spare me.”

“What do you wish me to do, uncle?”

“Leave London immediately and stay away until this tumult has settled down.”

“Ah, that is impossible, sir.”

“Impossible?”

“Quite impossible, and though I did not make these predictions about the destruction of London, yet I believe we are on the eve of a great change.”

"You do?"

"Yes, and if you had not sent for me I should have called on you, to ask you to set aside a day for public prayer that God may in His mercy avert the calamity that is coming, or direct it to the salvation of His servants. The morality of the nation is on the decline, uncle, and when morality is lacking the end is not far off. England is given up to idleness, pomp, dissolute practices, and pleasure—pleasure, always pleasure. The vice of intemperance, the mania for gambling, these are the vultures that are consuming the vitals of our people. Look at the luxury of the country—a ludicrous travesty of national greatness! Look at the tastes and habits of our age—the deadliest enemies of true religion! And then look at the price we are paying in what the devil calls 'the priestesses of society' for the tranquillity of the demon of lust."

"But my boy, my dear boy——"

"Oh, yes, uncle, yes, I know, I know—many humanitarian schemes are afloat and we think we are not indifferent to the condition of the poor. But contrast the toiling women of East London with the idlers of Hyde Park in a London season. Other nations have professed well with their lips while their hearts have been set on wealth and pleasure. And they have fallen. Yes, sir, in ancient Asia as well as in modern Europe they have always fallen. And unless we unglue ourselves from the vanities which imperil our existence we shall fall too. The lust of pleasure and the lust of wealth bring their own revenges. In the nation as well as the individual the Almighty destroys them as of old."

"True—true!"

"Then how can I hold my peace or run away while

it is the duty of Christians, of patriots, to cry out against this danger? On the soul of every one of us the duty rests, and who am I that I should escape from it? Oh, if the Church only realised her responsibility, if she only kept her eyes open——”

“She has powerful reasons for keeping them closed, my son,” said the Minister, “and always will have until the Establishment is done away with. It is coming to that some day, but meantime have a care. The clergy are not your friends, John. Statesmen know too well the clerical cruelty which shelters itself behind the secular arm. It is an old story, I think, and you may find instances of that also in your ancient Palestine. But beware, my boy, beware——”

“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you!”

The exaltation of John’s manner was increasing, and again the Prime Minister became uneasy, as if fearing that the young monk by his side would ask him next to kneel and pray.

“Ah, well,” he said, rising, “I suppose there is no help for it, and matters must take their own course.” Then he broke into other subjects, talked of his brother, John’s father, whom he had lately heard from. His health was failing, he could not last very long, a letter from his son now might make all things well.

John was silent, his head was down, but the Prime Minister could see that his words took no effect. Then his bleak old face smiled a wintry smile as he said—

“But you are not mending much in one way, my boy. Do you know you’ve never once been here since the day you came to tell me you were to be married, and intended to follow in the footsteps of Father Damien!”

John flinched, and the muscles of his face twitched nervously again.

"That was an impossible enterprise, John. No wonder the lady couldn't suffer you to follow it. But she might have allowed you to see a lonely old kinsman for all that." John's pale face was breaking and his breath was coming fast. "Well, well," taking his arm, "I'm not reproaching you, John. There are passions of the soul which eat up all the rest, I know that quite well, and when a man is under the sway of them he has neither father nor uncle, neither kith nor kin. Good-bye! . . . Ah, this way out—this way."

The footman had stepped up to the Minister and whispered something about a crowd in front of the house, and John was passed out of the garden by the back-door into the Park.

Three hours afterwards the frequenters of Epsom race-course saw a man in a black cassock get up into an unoccupied waggonette and make ready to speak. He was on the breast of "The Hill," directly facing the grand stand, in a close pack of carriages, four-in-hands, landaus, and hansom, filled with gaily-dressed women in pink and yellow costumes, drinking champagne and eating sandwiches, and being waited upon by footmen in livery. It was the interval between two events of the race-meeting, and beyond the labyrinth of vehicles there was a line of betting men in outer garments of blue silk and green alpaca, standing on stools under huge umbrellas and calling the odds to motley crowds of sweltering people on foot.

"Men and women," he began, and five thousand faces seemed to rise at the sound of his voice. The book-makers kept up their nasal cries of "I lay on the field!"

"Five to one bar one!" But the crowd turned and deserted them. "It's the Father, Father Storm," the people said, with laughter and chuckling, loose jests and some swearing, but they came up to him with one accord until the space about him, as far as to the roadway by which carriages climbed the hill, was an unbroken pavement of rippling faces.

"Good old Father!" and then laughter. "What abart the end of the world, old gel?" and then references to the "petticoats," and more laughter. "'Ere, I'll 'ave five bob each way Resurrection," and shrieks of wilder laughter still.

The preacher stood for some moments silent and unshaken. Then the quiet dignity of the man and the love of fair play in the crowd secured him a hearing. He began amid general silence.

"I don't know if it is contrary to regulations to stand here to speak, but I am risking that for the urgency of the hour and message. Men and women, you are here under false pretences. You pretend to yourselves and to each other that you have come out of a love of sport, but you have not done so, and you know it. Sport is a plausible pleasure; to love horses and take delight in their fleetness is a pardonable vanity, but you are here to practise an unpardonable vice. You have come to gamble, and your gambling is attended by every form of intemperance and immorality. I am not afraid to tell you so, for God has laid upon me a plain message, and I intend to do my duty. These racecourses are not for horse-racing, but for reservoirs of avarice and drunkenness and prostitution. Don't think," he was looking straight into the painted faces of the women in pink and yellow, who were trying to smile and look amused, "don't think I am going to

abuse the unhappy girls who are forced by a corrupt civilisation to live by their looks. They are my friends, and half my own life is spent among them. I have known some of them in whose hearts dwelt heavenly purity, and when I think of what they have suffered from men, I feel ashamed that I am a man. But, my sisters, for you too I have an urgent message. It is full summer with you now, as you sit here in your gay clothes on this bright day, but the winter is coming for every one of you, when there will be no more sunshine, no more luxury and pleasure and flattery, and when the miry wallowers in troughs and sties who are now taking the best years of your lives from you——”

“Helloa there! Whoop! Tarara-ra-ra-rara!”

A four-in-hand coach was dashing headlong up the hill amid clouds of dust, the rattling of wheels, the shouts of the driver, and the blasts of the horn, and the people who covered the roadway were surging forward to make room for it.

“It’s Gloria!” said everybody, looking up at the occupants of the coach and recognising one of them.

The spell of the preacher was broken. He paused and turned his head and saw Glory. She was sitting tall and bright and gay on the box-seat by the side of Drake; the rays of the sun were on her, and she was smiling up into his face.

The preacher began again, then faltered, and then stopped. A bell at the grand stand was ringing. “Numbers goin’ up,” said everybody, and before anyone could be conscious of what was happening John Storm was only a cipher in the throng and the crowd was melting away.

IV.

THE great carnival completely restored Glory's spirits. She laughed and cried out constantly, and lived from minute to minute like a child. Everybody recognised her, and nearly everybody saluted her. Drake beamed with pride and delight. He took her about the course, answered her questions, punctuated her jests, and explained everything, leaving Lord Robert to entertain his guests. Who were "those dwellers in tents"? They were the Guards' Club; and the service was also represented by artillerymen, king's hussars, and a line regiment from Aldershot. This was called "The Hill," where jovial rascaldom usually swarmed, looking out for stray overcoats and the lids of luncheon dishes left unprotected on carriages. Yes, the pickpocket, the card-sharper, the "lumberer," the confidence man, the blarneying beggar, and the fakir of every description laid his snares on this holy spot. In fact, this is his sanctuary, and he peddles under the eye of the police. "Holy Land?" Ha, ha! "All the patriarchs out of the Bible here?" Oh, the vociferous gentlemen with patriarchal names in velveteen coats, under the banners and canvas signboards—Moses, Aaron, and so forth? They were the "bookies," otherwise bookmakers, generally Jews, and sometimes welshers.

"Here, come along, some of you sportsmen. I ain't made the price of my railway fare, s'elp me!" "It's a dead cert, gents." "Can't afford to buy thick 'uns at four quid apiece." "Five to one on the field!" "I lay on the field!"

A "thick 'un"? Oh, that was a sovereign, half a thick 'un half a sovereign, twenty-five pounds a "pony," five hundred a "monkey," flash notes were "stumers," and a

bookmaker who couldn't pay was "a welsher." That? That was "the great Brockton," gentleman and tipster. "Amusement enough?" Yes; niggers, harpists, Christy minstrels, strong men, acrobats, agile clowns and girls on stilts, and all the ragamuffins from "the Burrer" bent on "making a bit." African Jungle? A shooting-gallery with model lions and bears. Fine Art Exhibition? A picture of the hanging of recent murderers. Boxing ring? Yes, for women—they strip to the waist, and fight like fiends. Then look at the lady auctioneer selling brass sovereigns a penny apiece.

"Buy one, gentlemen, and see what they're like, so as the 'bookies' can't pawse 'em on ye unawares."

"Food enough!" Yes, at Margett's, Patton's, Hatton's, and "The Three Brooms," as well as the barrows for stewed eels, hard-boiled eggs, trotters, coker-nuts, winkles, oysters, cockles, and all the luxuries of the New Cut. Why were they calling that dog "Cookshop"? Because he was pretty sure to go there in the end!

By this time they had ploughed over some quarter of a mile of the hill-side, fighting their way among the carriages that stood six deep along the rails, and through a seething mass of ruffianism, in a stifling atmosphere, polluted by the smell of ale and the reeking breath of tipsy people.

"Whoo! I feel like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego rolled into one," said Glory.

"Let us go into the paddock," said Drake, and they began to cross the race track.

"But wasn't that somebody preaching as we galloped down the hill?"

"Was it? I didn't notice," and they struggled through. It was fresh and cool under the trees, and Glory

thought it cheap even at ten shillings a head to walk for ten minutes on green grass. Horses waiting for their race were being walked about in clothes with their names worked on the quarter-sheets, and breeders, trainers, jockeys, and clerks of the course mingled with gentlemen in silk hats and ladies in smart costumes.

Drake's horse was a big bay colt, very thin, almost gaunt, and with long, high-stepping legs. The trainer was waiting for a last word with his owner. He was cool and confident. "Never better or fitter, Sir Francis, and one of the grandest three-year-olds that ever looked through a bridle. Improved wonderful since he got over his dental troubles, and does justice to the contents of his manger. Capital field, sir, but it's got to run up against summat smart to-day. Favourite, sir? Pooh! A coach-horse! Not stripping well—light in the flank and tucked up. But this colt fills the eye as a first-class one should. Whatever beats him will win, sir, take my word for that."

And the jockey, standing by in his black and white jacket, wagged his head, and said in a cheery whisper, "Have what ye like on 'im, Sir Francis. Great horse, sir! Got a Derby in 'im or I'm a Slowcome."

Drake laughed at their predictions, and Glory patted the creature while it beat its white feet on the ground and the leather of its saddle squeaked. The club stand from there looked like a sea of foaming laces, feathers, flowers, and sunshades. They turned to go to it, passing first by the judge's box, whereof Drake explained the use; then through the Jockey Club enclosure, which was full of peers, peeresses, judges, members of Parliament, and other turfites; and finally through the betting-ring, where some hundreds of betting-men of the superior class proclaimed their calling in loud voices and loud clothes

and the gold letters on their betting-books. To one of these pencillers Drake said—

“What’s the figure for Ellan Vannin?”

“Ten to one market price, sir.”

“I’ll take you in hundreds,” said Drake, and they struggled through the throng.

Going up the stairs Glory said, “But wasn’t the Archdeacon at your office this morning? We saw him coming out of the square with little Mr. Golightly.”

“Oh, did you? How hot it is to-day!”

“Isn’t it? I feel as if I should like to play Ariel in gossamer. . . . But wasn’t it?”

“You needn’t trouble about that, Glory. It’s an old story that religious intolerance likes to throw the responsibility of its acts on the civil government.”

“Then John Storm——”

“He is in no danger yet—none whatever.”

“Oh, how glorious!” They had reached the balcony, and Glory was pretending that the change in her voice and manner came of delight at the sudden view. She stood for a moment spell-bound, and then leaned over the rail and looked through the dazzling haze that was rising from the vast crowd below. Not a foot of turf was to be seen for a mile around, save where at the jockeys’ gate a space was kept clear by the police. It was a moving mass of humanity, and a low indistinguishable murmur was coming up from it such as the sea makes on the headlands above.

The cloud had died off Glory’s face, and her eyes were sparkling. “What a wonderfully happy world it must be after all!” she said.

Just then the standard was hoisted over the royal stand to indicate that the Prince had arrived. Immedi-

ately afterwards there was a silent movement of hats on the lawn below the boxes, and then somebody down there began to sing "God save the Queen." The people on the grand stand took up the chorus, then the people on the course joined in, then the people on the "Hill," until, finally, the whole multitude sang the national hymn in a voice that was like the voice of an ocean.

Glory's eyes were now full of tears; she was struggling with a desire to cry aloud, and Drake, who was watching her smallest action, stood before her to screen her from the glances of gorgeously-attired ladies who were giggling and looking through lorgnettes. The fine flower of the aristocracy was present in force, and the club stand was full of the great ladies who took an interest in sport, and even kept studs of their own. Oriental potentates were among them in suits of blue and gold, and the French language was being spoken on all sides.

Glory attracted attention, and Drake's face beamed with delight. An illustrious personage asked to be introduced to her, and said he had seen her first performance and predicted her extraordinary success. She did not flinch. There was a slight tremor, a scarcely perceptible twitching of the lip, and then she bore her honours as if she had been born to them. The Prince entertained a party to luncheon, and Drake and Glory were invited to join it. All the smart people were there, and they looked like a horticultural exhibition of cream colour and rose pink and grey. Glory kept watching the great ones of the earth, and she found them very amusing.

"Well, what do you think?" said Drake.

"I think most people at the Derby must have the wrong make-up on. That gentleman, now—he ought to

be done up as a stable-boy. And that lady in mauve—she's a ballet girl really, only——"

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" But Glory whispered, "Let's go round the corner and laugh."

She sat between Drake and a ponderous gentleman with a great beard like a waterfall.

"What are the odds against the colt, Drake?"

Drake answered, and Glory recalled herself from her studies and said, "Oh yes, what did you say it was?"

"A prohibitive price—for you," said Drake.

"Nonsense! I'm going to do a flutter on my own, you know, and plunge against you."

It was explained to her that only bookmakers bet against horses, but the gentleman with the beard volunteered to reverse positions, and take Glory's ten to one against Ellan Vannin.

"In what?"

"Oh—h'm—in thick 'uns, of course."

"But what is the meaning of this running after strange gods?" said Drake.

"Never mind, sir! 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,' you know . . ." and then the bell rang for the race of the day, and they scurried back to the stand. The numbers were going up, and a line of fifty policemen abreast were clearing the course. Some of the party had come over from the coach, and Lord Robert was jotting down in a note-book the particulars of betting commissions for his fair companions.

"And am I to be honoured with a commission from the Hurricane?" he asked.

"Yes; what's the price for Ellan Vannin?"

"Come down to five to one, pretty lady."

"Get me one to five that he's going to lose."

"But what in the world are you doing, Glory?" said Drake—his eyes were dancing with delight.

"Running a race with that old man in the box which can find a loser first."

At that moment the horses were sent out for the preliminary canter and parade before the royal stand, and a tingling electrical atmosphere seemed to come from somewhere and set every tongue wagging. It seemed as if something unexpected was about to occur, and countless eyes went up to the place where Drake stood with Glory by his side. He was outwardly calm, but with a proud flush under his pallor; she was visibly excited, and could not stand on the same spot for many seconds together. By this time the noise made by the bookmakers in the enclosure below was like that of ten thousand seafowl on a reef of rock, and Glory was trying to speak above the deafening clangour.

"Silver and gold have I none, but if I had——What's that?"

A white flag had fallen as signal for the start, there was a hollow roar from the starting-post point, and people were shouting "They're off!" Then there was a sudden silence, a dead hush, below, above, around, everywhere, and all eyes, all glasses, all lorgnettes were turned in the direction of the runners.

The horses got well away, and raced up the hill like cavalry charging in line, then at the mile-post the favourite drew to the front, and the others went after him in an indistinguishable mass. But the descent seemed not to his liking, he twisted a good deal, and the jockey was seen sawing the reins and almost hanging over the horse's head. When the racers swung round Tattenham Corner and came up like mice in the distance, it was seen that

another horse had taken advantage of an opening and was overhauling the favourite with a tremendous rush. His colours were white and black. It was Ellan Vannin. From that moment Drake's horse never relinquished his advantage, but came down the straight like a great bird with his wings ceasing to flap, passed the stand amid great excitement, and won handsomely by a length.

Then, in the roar of delight that went up from the crowd, Glory with her hand on Drake's shoulder was seen to be crying, laughing, and cheering at the same moment.

"But *you've* lost," said Drake.

"Oh, bother that," she said, and when the jockey had slipped from his saddle and Drake had taken his horse into the weighing-room, and the "All right" was shouted, she started the cheering again, and said she meant to make a dead heat of it with Tennyson's brook.

"But why did you bet against me?" said Drake.

"You silly boy," she answered with a crow of happiness and gaiety, "didn't the gipsy tell me I should lose money to-day? And how could I bet on your horse unless you lost the race?"

Drake laughed merrily at her delicious duplicity, and could hardly resist an impulse to take her in his arms and kiss her. Meantime, his friends were slapping him on the back, and people were crushing up to offer him congratulations. He turned to take his horse into the paddock, and Lord Robert took Glory down after him. The trainer and jockey were there, looking proud and happy, and Drake, with a pale and triumphant face, was walking the great creature about as if reluctant to part with it. It was breathing heavily, and sweat stood in drops on its throat, head, and ears.

"Oh you beauty! How I should love to ride you!" said Glory.

"But dare you?" said Drake.

"Dare I! Only give me the chance."

"I will, by —— I will, or it won't be my fault."

Somebody brought champagne and Glory had to drink a bumper to "the best horse of the century, bar none." Then her glass was filled afresh, and she had to drink to the owner, "the best fellow on earth, bar none," and again she was compelled to drink "to the best bit of history ever made at Epsom, bar none." With that she was excused while the men drank at Drake's proposal, "to the loveliest, liveliest, leeriest, little woman in the world, God bless her," and she hid her face in her hands and said with a merry laugh, "Tell me when it's over, boys, and I'll come again."

After Drake had despatched telegrams and been bombarded by interviewers, he led the way back to the coach on the Hill, and the company prepared for their return. The sun had now gone, a thick veil of stagnant clouds had gathered over the place of it, the sky looked sulky, and Glory's head had begun to ache between the eyes. Rosa was to go home by train in order to reach her office early, and Glory half wished to accompany her. But an understudy was to play her part that night and she had no excuse. The coach wormed its way through the close pack of vehicles at the top of the hill, and began to follow the ebbing tide of humanity back to London.

"But what about my pair of gloves?"

"Oh, you're a hard man, reaping where you have not sowed, and gathering——"

"There, then, we're quits," said Drake, leaning over from the box-seat and snatching a kiss of her. It was now clear that he had been drinking a good deal.

V.

BEFORE the race had been run a solitary man with a dog at his heels had crossed the Downs on his way back to the railway station. Jealousy and rage possessed his heart between them, but he would not recognise these passions; he believed his emotions to be horror and pity and shame. John Storm had seen Glory on the race-course in Drake's company, under Drake's protection: he proud and triumphant, she bright and gay and happy.

"O Lord, help me! Help me, O Lord!"

And now dragging along the road, in his mind's eye he saw her again as the victim of this man, his plaything, his pastime to take up or leave, no better than any of the women about her, and where they were going she would go also. Some day he would find her where he had found others, outcast, deserted, forlorn, lost, down in the trough of life, a thing of loathing and contempt.

"O Lord, help her! Help her, O Lord!"

There were few passengers by the train going back to London, nearly all traffic at this hour being the other way, and there was no one else in the compartment he occupied. He threw himself down in a corner, consumed with indignation and a strange sense of dishonour. Again he saw her bright eyes, her red lips, the glow of her whole radiant face, and a paroxysm of jealousy tore his heart to pieces. Glory was his. Though a bottomless abyss was yawning between them, her soul belonged to him, and a great upheaval of hatred for the man who possessed her body surged up to his throat. Against all

this his pride as well as his religion rebelled. He crushed it down and tried to turn his mind to another current of ideas. How could he save her? If she should go down to perdition, his remorse would be worse to bear than flames of fire and brimstone. The more unworthy she was, the more reason he should strive to rescue her soul from the pangs of eternal torment.

The rattling of the carriage broke in upon these visions, and he got up and paced to and fro like a bear in a cage. And like a bear with its slow, strong grip he seemed to be holding her in his wrath and saying, "You shall not destroy yourself, you shall not, you shall not, for I—I—I forbid it!" Then he sank back in his seat exhausted by the conflict which made his soul a battlefield of spiritual and sensual passions. Every limb shook and quivered. He began to be afraid of himself, and he felt an impulse to fly away somewhere. When he alighted at Victoria his teeth were chattering, although the atmosphere was stifling and the sky was now heavy with black and lowering clouds.

To avoid the eyes of the people who usually followed him in the streets, he cut through a narrow thoroughfare and went back to Brown's Square by way of the Park. But the Park was like a vast camp. Thousands of people seemed to cover the grass as far as the eye could reach, and droves of workmen, followed by their wives and children, were trudging to other open spaces farther out. It was the panic terror. Afterwards it was calculated that fifty thousand persons from all parts of London had quitted the doomed city that day to await the expected catastrophe under the open sky.

The look of fierce passion had faded from his face by the time he reached his church, but there another ordeal

awaited him. Though it still wanted an hour of the time of evening service, a great crowd had gathered in the square. He tried to escape observation, but the people pressed upon him, some to shake his hand, others to touch his cassock, and many to kneel at his feet, and even to cover them with kisses. With a sense of shame and hypocrisy he disengaged himself at length, and joined Brother Andrew in the sacristy. The simple fellow was full of marvellous stories. There had been wondrous manifestations of the workings of the Holy Spirit during the day. The knocker-up, who was a lame man, had shaken hands with the Father on his way home that morning, and now he had thrown away his stick and was walking firmly and praising God.

The church was large and rectangular and plain, and looked a well-used edifice, open every day and all day. The congregation was visibly excited, but the service appeared to calm them. The ritual was full, with procession and incense, but without vestments, and otherwise monastic in its severity. John Storm preached. The Epistle for the day had been from 1st Corinthians, and he took his text from that source also: "Deliver him up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."

People said afterwards that they had never heard anything like that sermon. It was delivered in a voice that was low and tremulous with emotion. The subject was love. Love was the first inheritance that God had given to His creatures, the purest and highest, the sweetest and best. But man had degraded and debased it, at the temptation of Satan and the lust of the world. The expulsion of our first parents from Eden was only the poetic figure of what had happened through all the

ages. It was happening now. And London, the modern Sodom, would as surely pay its penalty as did the cities of the ancient East. No need to think of flood or fire or tempest, of any given day or hour. The judgment that would fall on England like the plagues that fell on Egypt would be of a kind with the offence. She had wronged the spirit of love, and who knows but God would punish her by taking out of the family of man the passion by which she fell—lifting it away with all that pertained to it, good and bad, spiritual and sensual, holy and corrupt?

The burning heat-clouds of the day seemed to have descended into the church, and in the gathering darkness the preacher, his face just visible, with his eyes full of smouldering fire, drew an awful picture of the world under the effects of such a curse. A place without unselfishness, without self-sacrifice, without heroism, without chivalry, without loyalty, without laughter, and without children! Every man standing alone, isolated, self-centred, self-cursed, outlawed, loveless, marriageless, going headlong to degeneracy and death! Such might be God's punishment on this cruel and wicked city for its sensual sins.

Then the preacher lost control of his imagination and swept his hearers along with him as he fabricated horrible fancies. The people were terror-stricken, and not until the last hymn was given out did they recover the colour of their blanched faces. Then they sang as with one voice, and after the benediction had been pronounced, and they were surging down the aisles in close packs, they started the hymn again.

Even when they had left the church they could not disperse. Out in the square were the thousands who had not been able to get inside the doors, and every moment the vast proportions of the crowd were swelled. The

ground was covered, the windows round about were thrown up and full of faces, and people had clambered on to the railings of the church, and even on to the roofs of the houses.

Somebody went to the sacristy and told the Father what was happening outside. He was now like a man beside himself, and going out on to the steps of the church, where he could be seen by all, he lifted his hands and pronounced a prayer in a sonorous and fervent voice—

“How long, O Lord, how long? From the bosom of God where Thou reposest, look down on the world where Thou didst walk as a man. Didst Thou not teach us to pray, ‘Thy kingdom come’? Didst Thou not say Thy kingdom was near; that some who stood with Thee should not taste of death till they had seen it come with power; that when it came the poor should be blessed, the hungry should be fed, the blind should see, the heavy-laden should find rest, and the will of Thy Father should be done on earth even as it is done in heaven? But nigh upon two thousand years have gone, O Lord, and Thy kingdom hath not come. In Thy name now doth the Pharisee give alms in the streets to the sound of a trumpet going before him. In Thy name now doth the Levite pass by on the other side when a man has fallen among thieves. In Thy name now doth the priest buy and sell the glad tidings of the kingdom, giving for the gospel of God the commandments of men, living in rich men’s houses, faring sumptuously every day, praying with his lips, ‘Give us this day our daily bread,’ but saying to his soul, ‘Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry.’ How long, O Lord, how long?”

Hardly had John Storm stepped back when the heavy clouds broke into mutterings of thunder. So low were

the sounds at first that in the general tumult they were scarcely noticed; but they came again and again, louder and louder with every fresh reverberation, and then the excitement of the people became intense and terrible. It was as if the heavens themselves had spoken to give sign and assurance of the calamity that had been foretold.

First a woman began to scream as if in the pains of labour. Then a young girl cried out for mercy, and accused herself of countless and nameless offences. Then the entire crowd seemed to burst into sobs and moans and agonising expressions of despair, mingled with shouts of wild laughter and mad thanksgiving: "Pardon, pardon!" "O Jesus, save me!" "O Saviour of sinners!" "O God, have mercy upon me!" "Oh, my heart, my heart!" Some threw themselves on the ground, stiff and motionless and insensible as dead men. Others stood over the stricken people and prayed for their relief from the power of Satan. Others fell into convulsions; and yet others, with wild and staring eyes, rejoiced in their own salvation.

It was now almost dark, and some of the people who had been out to the Derby were returning home in their gigs and coster's carts, laughing, singing, and nearly all of them drunk. There were wild encounters. A young soldier (it was Charlie Wilkes) came upon Pincher the pawnbroker. "Wot tcher, myte? Wot's yer amoosemint now?"

"Silence, you evil liver, you gambler, you son of Belial!"

"Stou thet, now; d'ye want a kepple er black eyes or a pench on the nowze?"

At nine o'clock the police of Westminster, being

unable to disperse the crowd, sent to Scotland Yard for the mounted constabulary.

VI.

MEANTIME the man who was the first cause of the tumult sat alone in his cell-like chamber under the church, a bare room, without carpet or rug, and having no furniture except a block bed, a small washstand, two chairs, a table, a prayer-stool and crucifix, and a print of the Virgin and Child. He heard the singing of the people outside, but it brought him neither inspiration nor comfort. Nature could no longer withstand the strain he had put upon it, and he was in deep dejection. It was one of those moments of revulsion which come to the strongest soul when at the crown, or near the crown, of his expectations he asks himself, "What is the good?" A flood of tender recollections was coming over him. He was thinking of the past, the happy past, the past of love and innocence which he had spent with Glory; of the little green island in the Irish Sea, and of all the sweetness of the days they had passed together before she had fallen to the temptations of the world, and he had become the victim of his hard if lofty fate. Oh, why had he denied himself the joys that came to all others? To what end had he given up the rewards of life which the poorest and the weakest and the meanest of men may share? Love, woman's love! why had he turned his back upon it? Why had he sacrificed himself? O God! if indeed it were all in vain?

Brother Andrew put his head in at the half-open door. His brother, the pawnbroker, was there, and had something to say to the Father. Pincher's face looked

over Andrew's shoulder. The muscles of the man's eyes were convulsed by religious mania.

"I've just sold my bizness, sir, and we 'aven't a roof to cover us now," he cried, in the tone of one who had done something heroic.

John asked him what was to become of his mother.

"Lor, sir, ain't it the beginning of the end? That's the gawspel, ain't it? 'The foxes hev 'oles and the birds of the air hev nests——'"

And then close behind the man, interrupting him and pushing him aside, there came another, with fixed and staring eyes, crying, "Look 'ere, Father! Look! Twenty years I 'obbed on a stick, and look at me now! Praise the Lawd, I'm cured, en' no bloomin' error! I'm a brand as was plucked from the burnin' when my werry ends 'ad caught the flames. Praise the Lawd, Amen!"

John rebuked them and turned them out of the room, but he was almost in as great a frenzy. When he had shut the door, his mind went back to thoughts of Glory. She, too, was hurrying to the doom that was coming on all this wicked city. He had tried to save her from it, but he had failed. What could he do now? He felt a desire to do something—something else, something extraordinary.

Sitting on the end of the bed, he began again to recall Glory's face as he had seen it at the racecourse. And now it came to him as a shock, after his visions of her early girlhood, He thought there was a certain vulgarity in it which he had not observed before; a slight coarsening of its expression, an indescribable degeneracy, even under the glow of its developed beauty. With her full red lips and curving throat and dancing eyes she was smiling into the face of the man who was sitting by her

side. Her smile was a significant smile, and the bright and eager look with which the man answered it was as full of meaning. He could read their thoughts. What had happened? Were all barriers broken down? Was everything understood between them?

This was the final madness, and he leapt to his feet in an outburst of uncontrollable rage. All at once he shuddered with a feeling that something terrible was brewing within him. He felt cold, a shiver was running over his whole body. But the thought he had been in search of had come to him of itself. It came first as a shock, and with a sense of indescribable dread, but it had taken hold of him and hurried him away. He had remembered his text, "Deliver him up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."

"Why not?" he thought. "It is in the Holy Book itself. There is the authority of St. Paul for it. Clearly the early Christians countenanced and practised such things." But then came a spasm of physical pain. That beautiful life so full of love and loveliness, radiating joy and sweetness and charm! The thing was impossible! It was monstrous! "Am I going mad?" he asked himself.

And then he began to be sorry for himself as well as for Glory. How could he live in the world without her? Although he had lost her, although an impassable gulf divided them, although he had not seen her for six months until to-day, yet it was something to know she was alive, and that he could go at night to the place where she was, and look up and think, "She is there." "It is true I am going mad," he thought, and he trembled again.

His mind oscillated among these conflicting ideas until the more hideous thought returned to him of Drake and the smile exchanged with Glory. Then the blood rushed to his head, and strong emotion paralysed his reason. When he asked himself if it was right in England, and in the nineteenth century, to contemplate a course which might have been proper to Palestine and the first century, the answer came instantaneously that it *was* right. Glory was in peril. She was tottering on the verge of hell. It would not be wrong, but a noble duty, to prevent the possibility of such a hideous catastrophe. Better a life ended than a life degraded and a soul destroyed.

On this the sophism worked. It was true that he would lose her; she would be gone from him, she who was all his joy, his vision by day, his dream by night. But could he be so selfish as to keep her in the flesh, and thus expose her soul to eternal torment? And, after all, she would be his in the other world, his for ever, his alone. Nay, in this world also, for, being dead, he would love her still. "But, O God, must I do it?" he asked himself at one moment, and at the next came his answer, "Yes, yes, for I am God's minister."

That sent him back to his text again. "Deliver him up to *Satan* . . ." But there was a marginal reference to Timothy, and he turned it up with a trembling hand. *Satan* again; but the Revised Version gave "the Lord's servant," and thus the text should read, "Deliver him up to the Lord's servant for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord." This made him cry out. He drank it in with inebriate delight. The thing was irrevocably decided. He was justified, he was authorised, he was the instrument of

a fixed purpose. No other considerations could move him now.

By this time his heart and temples were beating violently, and he felt as if he were being carried up into a burning cloud. Before his eyes rose the vision of Isaiah, the meek lamb converted into an inexorable avenger descending from the summit of Edom. It was right to shed blood at the Divine command, nay, it was necessary, it was inevitable. And as God had commanded Abraham to take the life of Isaac whom he loved, so did God call on him, John Storm, to take the life of Glory, that he might save her from the risk of everlasting damnation.

There may have been intervals in which his sense of hearing left him, for it was only now that he became conscious that somebody was calling to him from the other side of the door.

"Is anybody there?" he asked, and a voice replied—

"Dear heart, yes, this five minutes and better, but I didna dare come in, thinking surely there was somebody talking with you. Is there no somebody here, then? No?"

It was Mrs. Callender, who was carrying a small Gladstone bag.

"Oh, it's you, is it?"

"Aye, it's mysel', and sorry I am to be bringing bad news to you."

"What is it?" he asked; but his tone betrayed complete indifference.

She closed the door, and answered in a whisper, "A warrant! I much misdoubt but there's one made out for you."

"Is that all?"

"Bless me, what does the man want? But come, lad-die, come, you must tak' yoursel' off to some spot till the storm blows over."

"I have work to do, auntie."

"Work! You've worked too much already—that's half the botherment."

"God's work, auntie, and it must be done."

"Then God will do it Himself, without asking the life of a good man, or He's no just what I've been takin' Him for. But see," opening the bag and whispering again, "your auld coat and hat! I found them in your puir auld room that you'll no come back to. You've been looking like another body so long that naebody will ken you when you're like yoursel' again. Come, now, off with these lang ugly things."

"I cannot go, auntie."

"Cannot?"

"I will not. While God commands me I will do my duty."

"Eh, but men are kittle cattle! I've often called you my ain son; but if I were your ain mother I ken fine what I'd do with you—I'd just slap you and mak' you. I'll leave the clothes anyway. Maybe you'll be thinking better of it when I'm gone. Good-night to you! Your puir head's that hot and moidered! But what's wrang with you, John, man? What's come over ye, anyway?"

He seemed to be hardly conscious of her presence, and after standing a moment at the door, looking back at him with eyes of love and pity, she left the room.

He had been asking himself for the first time how he was to carry out his design. Sitting on the end of the bed with his head propped on his hand, he felt as if he were in the hold of a great ship, listening to the plash

and roar of the stormy sea outside. The excitement of the populace was now ungovernable, and the air was filled with groans and cries. He would have to pass through the people, and they would see him and detain him, or perhaps follow him. His impatience was now feverish. The thing he had to do must be done to-night, it must be done immediately. But it was necessary in the first place to creep out unseen. How was he to do it?"

When he came to himself he had a vague sense of someone wishing him good-night. "Oh, good-night, good-night!" he cried with an apologetic gesture. But he was alone in the room, and on turning about he saw the bag on the floor, and remembered everything. Then a strange thing happened. Two conflicting emotions took hold of him at once, the first an enthusiastic religious ecstasy, the other a low criminal cunning.

Everything was intended! He was only the instrument of a fixed purpose! These clothes were proof of it. They came to his hand at the very moment when they were wanted, when nothing else would have helped him. And Mrs. Callender had been the blind agent in a higher hand to carry out the Divine commands. Fly away and hide himself? God did not intend it. A warrant? No matter if it sent him like Cranmer to the stake! But this was a different thing entirely, this was God's will and purpose, this——

Yet even while thinking so he laughed an evil laugh, tore the clothes out of the bag with trembling hands, and made ready to put them on. He had removed his cassock when someone opened the door.

"Who's there?" he cried in a husky growl.

"Only me," said a timid voice, and Brother Andrew entered, looking pale and frightened.

"Oh, you! Come in; close the door; I've something to say to you. Listen! I'm going out, and I don't know when I shall be back. Where's the dog?"

"In the passage, Brother."

"Chain him up at the back, lest he should get out and follow me. Put this cassock away, and if anybody asks for me, say you don't know where I've gone—you understand?"

"Yes, but are you well, Brother Storm? You look as if you had just been running."

There was a hand-glass on the washstand, and John snatched it up and glanced into it, and put it down again instantly. His nostrils were quivering, his eyes were ablaze, and the expression of his face was shocking.

"What are they doing outside? See if I can get away without being recognised;" and Brother Andrew went out to look.

The passage from the chambers under the church was into a dark and narrow street at the back; but even there a group of people had gathered, attracted by the lights in the windows. Their voices could be heard through the door which Brother Andrew had left ajar, and John stood behind and listened. They were talking of himself—praising him, blessing him—telling stories of his holy life and gentleness.

Brother Andrew reported that most of the people were at the front, and they were frantic with religious excitement. Women were crushing up to the rail which the Father had leaned his head upon for a moment after he had finished his prayer, in order to press their handkerchiefs and shawls on it.

"But nobody would know you now, Brother Storm—even your face is different."

John laughed again, but he turned off the lights, thinking to drive away the few who were still lingering in the back street. The ruse succeeded. Then the man of God went out on his high errand, crept out, stole out, sneaked out, precisely as if he had been a criminal on his way to commit a crime.

He followed the lanes and narrow streets and alleys behind the Abbey, past the "Bell," the "Boar's Head," and the "Queen's Arms"—taverns that have borne the same names since the days when Westminster was Sanctuary. People home from the races were going into them with their red ties awry, with sprigs of lilac in their button-holes and oak leaves in their hats. The air was full of drunken singing, sounds of quarrelling, shameful words and curses. There were some mutterings of thunder and occasional flashes of lightning, and over all there was the deep hum of the crowd in the church square.

Crossing the bottom of Parliament Street he was almost run down by a squadron of mounted police, who were trotting into Broad Sanctuary. To escape observation he turned on to the Embankment, and walked under the walls of the gardens of Whitehall, past the back of Charing Cross Station to the street going up from the Temple.

The gate of Clement's Inn was closed, and the porter had to come out of his lodge to open it.

"The Garden House!"

"Garden House, sir? Inner court, left-hand corner."

John passed through. "That will be remembered afterwards," he thought. "But no matter; it will all be over then."

And coming out of the close streets with their clatter of traffic into the cool gardens with their odour of moist-

ened grass, the dull glow in the sky and the glimpse of the stars through the tree-tops, his mind went back by a sudden bound to another night when he had walked over the same spot with Glory.

At that there came a spasm of tenderness, and his throat thickened. He could almost see her and feel her by his side, with her fragrant freshness and buoyant step. "O God, must I do it—must I—must I?" he thought again."

But another memory of that night came back to him: he heard Drake's voice as it floated over the quiet place. Then the same upheaval of hatred which he had felt before he felt again. The man was the girl's ruin; he had tempted her by love of dress, of fame, of the world's vanities and follies of every sort. This made him think for the first time of how he might find her. He might find her with *him*. They would come back from the Derby together. He would bring her home, and they would sup in company. The house would be lit up, the windows thrown open; they would be playing and singing and laughing, and the sounds of their merriment would come down to him into the darkness below.

All the better, all the better! He would do it before the man's face! And when it was done, when all was over, when she lay there . . . lay there . . . there . . . he would turn on the man and say, "Look at her, the sweetest girl that ever breathed the breath of life, the dearest, truest woman in all the world! You have done that—you—you—you—and God damn you!"

His tortured heart was afire and his brain was reeling. Before he knew where he was he had passed from the outer court into the inner one. "Here it is; this is the house," he thought. But it was all dark, just a few

lights burning, but they had been carefully turned down. The windows were closed, the blinds were drawn, and there was not a sound anywhere. He stood some minutes trying to think, and during that time the mood of frenzy left him and the low cunning came back. Then he rang the bell.

There was no answer, so he rang again. After awhile he heard a footstep that seemed to come up from below. Still the door was not opened, and he rang a third time.

"Who's there?" said a voice within.

"It is I; open the door," he answered.

"Who are you?" said the voice; and he replied impatiently—

"Come, come, Liza; open and see."

Then the catch-lock was shot back. At the next moment he was in the hall, shutting the door behind him, and Liza was looking up into his face with eyes of mingled fear and relief.

"Lor, sir, why ever didn't you say it was you?"

"Where's your mistress?"

"Gone to the office, and won't be back till morning; and Miss Gloria isn't home from the races yet."

"I must see her to-night; I'll wait upstairs."

"You must excuse me, sir—Farver I mean; but I wouldn't a'known your voice—it seemed so different. And me that sleepy too, being on the go since six in the mornin'——"

"Go to bed, Liza. You sleep in the kitchen, don't you?"

"Yes, sir, thank you; I think I will too. Miss Gloria can let herself in anyway, same as comin' from the theatre. But can I git ye anythink? No? Well, you know your wye up, sir, down't ye?"

"Yes, yes, good-night, Liza!"

"Good-night, Farver!"

He had set his foot on the stair to go up to the drawing-room when it flashed upon him that though he was the minister of God he was using the weapons of the devil. No matter! If he had been about to commit a crime it would have been different. But this was no crime, and he was no criminal. He was the instrument of God's mercy to the woman he loved. *He was going to slay her body that he might save her soul!*

VII.

THE journey home from the Derby had been a long one, but Glory had enjoyed it. When she had settled down to the physical discomfort of the blinding and choking dust, the humours of the road became amusing. This endless procession of good-humoured ruffianism sweeping through the most sacred retreats of nature, this inroad of every order of the Stygian demi-monde on to the slopes of Olympus, was intensely interesting. Men and women merry with drink, all laughing, shouting, and singing; some in fine clothes and lounging in carriages, others in striped jerseys and yellow cotton dresses huddled up on donkey-barrows; some smoking cigarettes and cigars and drinking champagne, others smoking clay pipes with the bowls downwards and flourishing bottles of ale; some holding rhubarb leaves over their heads for umbrellas and pelting the police with confetti, others wearing executioners' masks, false moustaches, and red-tipped noses, and blowing bleating notes out of penny-trumpets—but all one family, one company, one class.

There were ghastly scenes as well as humorous ones

—an old horse, killed by the day's work and thrown into the ditch by the roadside, axle-trees broken by the heavy loads and people thrown out of their carts and cut, boy tramps dragging along like worn-out old men, and a welsher with his clothes torn to ribbons stealing across the fields to escape a yelping and infuriated crowd.

But the atmosphere was full of gaiety, and Glory laughed at nearly everything. Lord Robert, with his arm about Betty's waist, was chaffing a coster who had a drunken woman on his back-seat. "Got a passenger, driver?" "Yuss, sir, and I'm agoin' 'ome to my wife to-night, and thet's more nor you dare do." A young fellow in pearl buttons was tramping along with a young girl in a tremendous hat. He snatched her hat off, she snatched off his, he kissed her, she smacked his face, he put her hat on his own head, she put on his hat, and then they linked arms and sang a verse of the "Old Dutch."

Glory reproduced a part of this love passage in pantomime, and Drake screamed with laughter.

It was seven o'clock before they reached the outskirts of London. By that time a hamper on the coach had been emptied and the bottles thrown out; the procession had drawn up at a dozen villages on the way; the perspiring tipsters, with whom "things hadn't panned out well," had forgotten their disappointments and "didn't care a tinker's cuss;" every woman in a barrow had her headgear in confusion, and was singing in a drunken wail. Nevertheless, Drake, who was laughing and talking constantly, said it was the quietest Derby night he had ever seen, and he couldn't tell what things were coming to.

"Must be this religious mania, don't you know," said Lord Robert, pointing to a new and very different scene which they had just then come upon.

It was an open space covered with people, who had lit fires as if intending to camp out all night, and were now gathered in many groups, singing hymns and praying. The drunken wails from the procession stopped for a moment, and there was nothing heard but the whirring wheels and the mournful notes of the singers. Then "Father Storm" rose like the cry of a cormorant from a thousand throats at once. When the laughter that greeted the name had subsided Betty said—

"Pon my honour, though, that man must be off his dot," and the lady in blue went into convulsion of hysterical giggling. Drake looked uneasy, and Lord Robert said, "Who cares what an elephant says?" But Glory took no notice now, save that for a moment the smile died off her face.

It had been agreed, when they cracked the head off the last bottle, that the company should dine together at the Café Royal or Romano's, so they drove first to Drake's chambers to brush the dust off and to wash and rest. Glory was the first to be ready, and while waiting for the others she sat at the organ in the sitting-room and played something. It was the hymn they had heard in the suburbs. At this there was laughter from the other side of the wall, and Drake, who seemed unable to lose sight of her, came to the door of his room in his shirt-sleeves. To cover up her confusion she sang a "coon" song. The company cheered her, and she sang another, and yet another. Finally, she began "My Mammie," but floundered, broke down, and cried.

"Rehearsal ten in the morning," said Betty.

Then everybody laughed, and while Drake busied himself putting Glory's cloak on her shoulders, he whispered—

"What's to do, dear? A bit off colour to-night, eh?"

"Be a good boy and leave me alone," she answered, and then she laughed also.

They were on the point of setting out when somebody said, "But it's late for dinner now—why not supper at the Corinthian Club?" At that the other ladies cried "Yes" with one voice. There was a dash of daring and doubtful propriety in the proposal.

"But are you game for it?" said Drake, looking at Glory.

"Why not?" she replied, with a merry smile, whereupon he cried "All right," and a look came into his eyes which she had never seen there before.

The Corinthian Club was in St. James's Square, a few doors from the residence of the Bishop of London. It was now dark, and as they passed through Jermyn Street a line of poor children stood by the poulterer's shop at the corner waiting for the scraps that are thrown away at closing time. York Street was choked with hansoms, but they reached the door at last. There were the sounds of music and dancing within. Officials in uniform stood in a hall examining the tickets of membership and taking the names of guests. The ladies removed their cloaks, the men hung up their coats and hats, a large door was thrown open, and they looked into the ball-room. The room was full of people as faultlessly dressed as at a house in Grosvenor Square. But the women were all young and pretty, and the men had no surnames. A long line of gilded youths in dress clothes occupied the middle of the floor. Each held by the waist the young man before him as if he were going to play leap-frog. "Helloa there!" shouted one of them, and the band struck up. Then the whole body kicked out right

and left, while all sang a chorus, consisting chiefly of "Tra-la-la-la-la-la!" One of them was a lord, another a young man who had lately come into a fortune, another a light comedian, another belonged to a big firm on the Stock Exchange, another was a mystery, and another was one of "the boys," and lived by fleecing all the rest. They were executing a dance from the latest burlesque. "Helloa there!" the conductor shouted again, and the band stopped.

Lord Robert led the way upstairs. Pretty women in light pinks and blues sat in every corner of the staircase. There was a balcony from which you could look down on the dancers as from the gallery of a playhouse. Also there was an American bar, where women smoked cigarettes. Lord Robert ordered supper, and when the meal was announced they went into the supper-room.

"Helloa there!" greeted them as they entered. At little tables, lit up by pink candles, sat small groups of shirt fronts and butterfly ties, with fair heads and pretty frocks. Waiters were coming and going with champagne and silver dishes; there was a clatter of knives and forks, and a jabber of voices and laughter. And all the time there came the sounds of the band, with the "Tra-la-la," from the ballroom below.

Glory sat by Drake. She realised that she had lowered herself in his eyes by coming there. He was drinking a good deal and paying her endless compliments. From time to time the tables about them were vacated and filled again by similar shirt fronts and fair heads. People were arriving from the Derby, and the talk was of the day's racing. Some of the new arrivals saluted Drake, and many of them looked at Glory. "A rippin' good race, old chappie. Didn't suit my book exactly,

but the bookies will have smiling faces at Tattersall's on Monday."

A man with a big beard at the next table pulled down his white waistcoat, lifted his glass, and said, "To Gloria!" It was her acquaintance of the racecourse.

"Who is Blue Beard?" she asked in a whisper.

"They call him the Faro King," said Drake. "Made all his money by gambling in Paris, and now he is a squire with a living in his gift."

Then over the laughter and voices, the band and the singing, with an awful suddenness there came a crash of thunder. The band and the comic song stopped, and there was a hush for a moment. Then Lord Robert said—

"Wonder if this is the dreadful storm that is to overwhelm the nation, don't you know!"

That fell on the house of frivolity like a second thunderbolt, and people began to look up with blanched faces.

"Well, it isn't the first time the *storm* has howled—it's been howling all along," said Lord Robert, but nobody laughed.

Presently the company recovered itself, the bands and the singing were heard again, louder and wilder than before, the men shouted for more champagne, and nicknamed every waiter "Father Storm."

Glory was ashamed. With her head on her hand she was looking at the people around, when the "Faro King," who had been making eyes at her, leaned over her shoulder and said in a confidential whisper, "And what is Gloria looking for?"

"I am looking for a *man*," she answered. And as the big beard turned away with "Oh, confound it," she became aware that Drake and Lord Robert were at high words from opposite sides of the table.

"No, I tell you no, no, *no!*" said Drake. "Call him a weakling and a fool and an ass, if you will, but does that explain everything? This is one of the men with the breath of God in him, and you can't judge of him by ordinary standards."

"Should think not, indeed, dear chap," said Lord Robert. "Common sense laughs at the creature."

"So much the worse for common sense. When it judges of these isolated beings by the standards of the common herd then common sense is always the greatest nonsense."

"Oho! Oho!" came in several voices, but Drake paid no attention.

"Jesus Christ Himself was mocked at and ridiculed by the common sense of His time, by His own people, and even His own family; and His family and people and time have been gibbeted by all the centuries that have come after them. And so it has been with every ardent soul since who has taken up His parable and introduced into the world a new spirit. The world has laughed at him, and spat upon him, and, only for its fear of the sublime banner he has borne, it would have shut him up in a madhouse."

They were strange words in a strange place. Everybody listened.

"But these sombre giants are the leaders of the world for all that, and one hour of their Divine madness is worth more to humanity than a cycle of our sanity. And yet we deny them friendship and love, and do our best to put them out of the pale of the human family! We have invented a new name for them too—degenerates—pigmies and pigs as we are, who ought to go down on our knees to them with our faces buried in the dirt!

Gentlemen," he cried, filling his glass and rising to his feet, "I give you a toast—the health of Father Storm!"

Glory had sat trembling all over, breathing hard, blushing, and wide-eyed until he had done. Then she leapt up to where he stood beside her, threw her arms about his neck and kissed him.

"And now you ring down quick, my dear," said Betty, and everybody laughed a little.

Drake was laughing with the rest, and Glory, who had dropped back to her seat in confused embarrassment, was trying to laugh too.

"Another bottle of fizz, anyway," cried Drake. He had mistaken the meaning of Glory's kiss and was utterly intoxicated by it. She could have cried with shame and rage, seeing he thought such conduct came naturally to her, and perhaps imagined it wasn't the first time she had done as much. But to carry off the situation she laughed a good deal with him and when the wine came they jingled glasses.

"I'm going to see you home to-night," he whispered, smiling slyly and looking her full in the eyes. She shook her head, but that only provoked him to fresh effort.

"I must—I will—you *shall* allow me," and he began to play with her hand and ruffle up the lace that covered her round arm.

Just then his man Benson, looking hot and excited, came up to him with a message. Glory overheard something about "the office," "the Secretary," and "Scotland Yard." Then Drake turned to her with a smile, over a look of vexation, and said, "I'm sorry, dear—very—I must go away for awhile. Will you stay here until I return, or . . ."

"Take me out and put me in a cab," said Glory. Their getting up attracted attention and Lord Robert said—

"Is it, perhaps, something about that——"

"It's nothing," said Drake, and they left the room.

The band in the ballroom was still playing the dance out of the burlesque, and half a hundred voices were shouting "Tra-la-la-la," as Glory stepped into a hansom.

"I'll follow on though," whispered Drake, with a merry smile.

"We shall all be in bed and the house locked up . . . How magnificent you were to-night!"

"I couldn't see the man trodden on when he was down . . . But how lovely you've looked to-day, Glory! I'll get in to-night if I have to ring up Liza or break down the door for it."

As the cab crossed Trafalgar Square it had to draw up for a procession of people coming up Parliament Street singing hymns. Another and more disorderly procession of people, decorated with oak leaves and hawthorns and singing a music-hall song, came up and collided with it. A line of police broke up both processions and the hansom passed through.

VII.

ON entering the drawing-room John Storm was seized with a weird feeling of dread. The soft air seemed to be filled with Glory's presence and her very breath to live in it. On the side-table a lamp was burning under a warm red shade. A heap of petty vanities lay about, articles of silver, little trinkets, fans, feathers, and flowers. His footsteps on the soft carpet made no noise. It was

all so unlike the place he had come from, his own bare chamber under the church.

He could have fancied that Glory had that moment left the room. The door of a little ebony cabinet stood half-open and he could see inside. Its lower shelves were full of shoes and little dainty slippers, some of them of leather, some of satin, some black, some red, some white. They touched him with an indescribable tenderness and he turned his eyes away. Under the lamp lay a pair of white gloves. One of them was flat and had not been worn, but the other was filled out with the impression of a little hand. He took it up and laid it across his own big palm, and another wave of tenderness broke over him.

On the mantelpiece there were many photographs. Most of them were of Glory and some were very beautiful, with their gleaming and glistening eyes and their curling and waving hair. One looked even voluptuous with its parted lips and smiling mouth; but another was different—it was so sweet, so gay, so artless. He thought it must belong to an earlier period, for the dress was such as she used to wear in the days when he knew her first, a simple jersey and a sailor's stocking-cap. Ah, those days that were gone, with their innocence and joy! Glory! His bright, his beautiful Glory!

His emotion was depriving him of the free use of his faculties, and he began to ask himself why he was waiting there. At the next instant came the thought of the awful thing he had come to do and it seemed monstrous and impossible. "I'll go away," he told himself and he turned his face towards the door.

On a whatnot at the door-side of the room another photograph stood in a glass stand. His back had been

to it, and the soft light of the lamp left a great part of the room in obscurity, but he saw it now, and something bitter that lay hidden at the bottom of his heart rose to his throat. It was a portrait of Drake, and at the sight of it he laughed savagely and sat down.

How long he sat he never knew. To the soul in torment there is no such thing as time; an hour is as much as eternity, and eternity is no more than an hour. His head was buried in his arms on the table, and he was a prey to anguish and doubt. At one time he told himself that God did not send men to commit murder; at the next, that this was not murder but sacrifice. Then a mocking voice in his ears seemed to say, "But the world will call it murder, and the law will punish you." To that he answered in his heart, "When I leave this house I will deliver myself up. I will go to the nearest police-court, and say, 'Take me; I have done my duty in the eye of God, but committed a crime in the eye of my country.'" And when the voice replied, "That will only lead to your own death also," he thought, "Death is a gain to those who die for their cause; and my death will be a protest against the degradation of women—a witness against the men who make them the creatures of their pleasure, their playthings, their victims, and their slaves." Thinking so, he found a strange thrill in the idea that all the world would hear of what he had done. "But I will say a mass for her soul in the morning," he told himself; and a chill came over him, and his heart grew cold as a stone.

Then he lifted his head and listened. The room was quiet, there was not a sound in the gardens of the Inn, and, through a window which was partly open, he could hear the monotonous murmur of the streets outside. A

great silence seemed to have fallen on London, a silence more awful than all the noise and confused clamour of the evening. "It must be late," he thought; "it must be the middle of the night." Then the thought came to him that perhaps Glory would not come home that night at all, and, in a sudden outburst of pent-up feeling, his heart cried, "Thank God! thank God."

He had said it aloud, and the sound of his voice in the silent room awakened all his faculties. Suddenly he was aware of other sounds outside. There was a rumble of wheels and the rattle of a hansom. The hansom came nearer and nearer. It stopped in the outside courtyard. There was the noise of a curb-chain, as if the horse were shaking its head. The doors of the hansom opened with a creak and banged back on their spring. A voice—a woman's voice—said, "Good-night!" and another voice—a man's voice—answered, "Good-night, and thank you, Miss!" Then the cab-wheels turned and went off.

All his senses seemed to have gone into his ears, and in the silence of that quiet place he heard everything. He rose to his feet and stood waiting.

After a moment there was the sound of a key in the lock of the door below; the rustle of a woman's dress coming up the stairs, an odour of perfume in the air, an atmosphere of freshness and health, and then the door of the room, which had been ajar, was swung open, and there on the threshold, with her languid and tired but graceful movements, was she herself, Glory. Then his head turned giddy, and he could neither hear nor see.

When Glory saw him standing by the lamp, with his deadly pale face, she stood a moment in speechless astonishment, and passed her hand across her eyes as if to

wipe out a vision. After that she clutched at a chair and made a faint cry.

"Oh, is it you?" she said, in a voice which she strove to control. "How you frightened me! Whoever would have thought of seeing you here!"

He was trying to answer, but his tongue would not obey him, and his silence alarmed her.

"I suppose Liza let you in—where *is* Liza?"

"Gone to bed," he said, in a thick voice.

"And Rosa—have you seen Rosa?"

"No."

"Of course not! How could you? She must be at the office, and won't be back for hours. So, you see, we are quite alone!"

She did not know why she said that, and, in spite of the voice which she tried to render cheerful, her lip trembled. Then she laughed, though there was nothing to laugh at, and down at the bottom of her heart she was afraid. But she began moving about, trying to make herself easy, and pretending not to be alarmed.

"Well, won't you help me off with my cloak? No? Then I must do it for myself, I suppose."

Throwing off her outer things, she walked across the room and sat down on the sofa near to where he stood.

"How tired I am! It's been such a day! Once is enough for that sort of thing, though! Now, where do you think I've been?"

"I know where you've been, Glory—I saw you there."

"You? Really? Then, perhaps, it *was* you who . . . Was it you in the hollow?"

"Yes."

He had moved to avoid contact with her, but now, standing by the mantelpiece looking into her face, he

could not help recognising in the fashionable woman at his feet the features of the girl once so dear to him, the brilliant eyes, the long lashes, the twitching of the eyelids, and the restless movement of the mouth. Then the wave of tenderness came sweeping over him again, and he felt as if the ground were slipping beneath his feet.

"Will you say your prayers to-night, Glory?" he said.

"Why not?" she answered, trying to laugh.

"Then why not say them now, my child?"

"But why?"

He had made her tremble all over; but she got up, walked straight across to him, looked intently into his face for a moment, and then said, "What is the matter? Why are you so pale? You are not well, John!"

"No; I am not well either," he answered.

"John, John, what does it all mean? What are you thinking of? Why have you come here to-night?"

"To save your soul, my child. It is in great, great peril."

At first she took this for the common, everyday language of the devotee, but another look into his face banished that interpretation, and her fear rose to terror. Nevertheless she talked lightly, hardly knowing what she said. "Am I, then, so very wicked? Surely heaven doesn't want me yet, John. Some day, I trust . . . I hope——"

"To-night, to-night, *now!*"

Then her cheeks turned pale and her lips became white and bloodless. She had returned to the sofa, and half rose from it, then sat back, stretching out one hand as if to ward off a blow, but still keeping her eyes riveted on his face. Once she looked round to the door and tried to cry out, but her voice would not answer her.

This speechless fright lasted only a moment. Then

she was herself again, and looked fearlessly up at him. She had the full use of her intellect, and her quick instinct went to the root of things. "This is the madness of jealousy," she thought. "There is only one way to deal with it. If I cry out—if I show that I am afraid—if I irritate him, it will soon be over." She told herself in a moment that she must try gentleness, tenderness, reason, affection, love.

Trembling from head to foot, she stepped up to him again, and began softly and sweetly, trying to explain herself. "John, dear John, if you see me with certain people and in certain places, you must not think from that——"

But he broke in upon her with a torrent of words. "I can't think of it at all, Glory. When I look ahead, I see nothing but shame, and misery, and degradation for you in the future. That man is destroying you, body and soul. He is leading you on to the devil, and hell, and damnation, and I cannot stand by and see it done."

"Believe me, John, you are mistaken—quite mistaken."

But with a look of sombre fury, he cried, "Can you deny it?"

"I can protect and care for myself, John."

"With that man's words in your ears still, can you deny it?"

Suddenly she remembered Drake's last whisper as she got into the hansom, and she covered her face with her hands.

"You can't! It is the truth! The man is following you to ruin you, and you know it. You've known it from the first, therefore you deserve all that can ever come to you. Do you know what you are guilty of?"

You are guilty of soul-suicide. What is the suicide of the body to the suicide of the soul? What is the crime of the poor broken creature who only chooses death and the grave before starvation or shame, compared to the sin of the wretched woman who murders her soul for the sake of the lusts and vanities of the world? The law of man may punish the one, but the vengeance of God is waiting for the other."

She was crying behind her hands, and in spite of the fury into which he had lashed himself a great pity took hold of him. He felt as if everything were slipping away from him, and he was trying to stand on an avalanche. But he told himself that he would not waver, that he would hold to his purpose, that he would stand firm as a rock. Heaving a deep sigh he walked to and fro across the room.

"O Glory, Glory! Can't you understand what it is to me to be the messenger of God's judgment?"

She gasped for breath, and what had been a vague surmise became a certainty—thinking he was God's avenger, yet with nothing but a poor spasm of jealousy in his heart, he had come with a fearful purpose to perform.

"I did what I could in other ways, and it was all in vain. Time after time I tried to save you from these dangers, but you would not listen. I was ready for any change, any sacrifice. Once I would have given up all the world for you, Glory—you know that quite well—friends, kinsmen, country, everything, even my work and my duty, and, but for the grace of God, God himself!"

But his tenderness broke again into a headlong torrent of reproach. "You failed me, didn't you? At the last moment too—the very last! Not content with the suicide of your own soul, you must attempt to murder

the soul of another. Do you know what that is? That is the unpardonable sin! You are crying, aren't you? Why are you crying?" But even while he said this something told him that all he was waiting for was that her beautiful eyes should be raised and their splendid light flash upon him again.

"But that is all over now! It was a blunder, and the breach between us is irreparable. I am better as I am, far, far better. Without friends, or kin, or country, consecrated for life, cut off from the world, separate, alone!"

She knew that her moment had come, and that she must vanquish this man, and turn him from his purpose whatever it was, by the only weapon a woman could use—his love of her. "I do not deny that you have a right to be angry with me," she said, "but don't think that I have not given up something too. At the time you speak of, when I chose this life and refused to go with you to the South Seas, I sacrificed a good deal—I sacrificed love. Do you think I didn't realise what that meant? That whatever the pleasure and delight my art might bring me, and the flattery, and the fame, and the applause, there were joys I was never to know—the happiness that every poor woman may feel, though she isn't clever at all, and the world knows nothing about her—the happiness of being a wife and a mother, and of holding her place in life, however humble she is and simple and unknown, and of linking the generations each to each. And though the world has been so good to me, do you think I have ever ceased to regret that? Do you think I don't remember it sometimes when the house rises at me, or when I am coming home, or perhaps when I awake in the middle of the night? And notwith-

standing all this success with which the world has crowned me, do you think I don't hunger sometimes for what success can never buy—the love of a good man who would love me with all his soul and his strength and everything that is his?”

Out of a dry and husky throat John Storm answered, “I would rather die a thousand, thousand deaths than touch a hair of your head, Glory . . . But God's will is His will!” he added quivering and trembling. The compulsion of a great passion was drawing him, but he struggled hard against it. “And then this success—you cling to it nevertheless!” he cried with a forced laugh.

“Yes, I cling to it,” she said, wiping away the tears that had begun to fall. “I cannot give it up—I cannot, I cannot!”

“Then what is the worth of your repentance?”

“It is not repentance: it is what you said it was in this room long ago . . . We are of different natures, John, that is the real trouble between us, now and always has been. But, whether we like it or not, our lives are wrapped up together for all that. We can't do without each other. God makes men and women like that sometimes.”

There was a piteous smile on his face. “I never doubted your feeling for me, Glory—no, not even when you hurt me most.”

“And if God made us so——”

“I shall never forgive myself, Glory, though heaven itself forgives me!”

“If God makes us love each other in spite of every barrier that divides us——”

“I shall never know another happy hour in this life, Glory, never!”

"Then why should we struggle? It is our fate, and we cannot conquer it. You can't give up your life, John, and I can't give up mine, but our hearts are one."

Her voice sang like music in his ears, and something in his aching heart was saying, "What are the laws we make for ourselves compared to the laws God makes for us?" Suddenly he felt something warm. It was Glory's breath on his hand. A fragrance like incense seemed to envelop him. He gasped as if suffocating; and sat down on the sofa.

"You are wrong, dear, if you think I care for the man you speak of. He has been very good to me, and helped me in my career, but he is nothing to me—nothing whatever . . . But we are such old friends, John! It seems impossible to remember a time when we were not old chums, you and I! Sometimes I dream of those dear old days in the 'lil oilan.' Aw, they were ter'ble—just ter'ble! Do you remember the boat—the *Gloria*—do you remember her?"

He clenched his hands as though to hold on to his purpose, but it was slipping through his fingers like sand.

"What times they were! Coming round the castle of a summer evening when the bay and the sky were like two sheets of silvered glass looking into each other, and you and I singing 'John Peel.'" (In a quavering voice she sang a bar or two.) "'D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so gay? D'ye ken John Peel? . . .'" Do you remember it, John?"

She was sobbing and laughing by turns. It was her old self, and the cruel years seemed to roll back. But still he struggled. "What is the love of the body to the love of the soul?" he told himself.

"You wore flannels then, and I was in a white jersey

—like this, see,” and she snatched up from the mantel-piece the photograph he had been looking at. “I got up my first act in imitation of it, and sometimes in the middle of a scene—such a jolly scene too—my mind goes back to that sweet old time, and I burst out crying.”

He pushed the photograph away. “Why do you remind me of those days?” he said. “Is it only to make me realise the change in you?” But even at that moment the wonderful eyes pierced him through and through.

“Am I so much changed, John? Am I? No, no, dear! It is only my hair done differently. See, see!” and with trembling fingers she tore her hair from its knot. It fell in clusters over her shoulders and about her face. He wanted to lay his hand on it, and he turned to her and then turned away, fighting with himself as with an enemy.

“Or is it this old rag of lace that is so unlike my jersey? There—there!” she cried, tearing the lace from her neck, and throwing it on the floor and trampling upon it. “Look at me now, John—look at me! Am I not the same as ever? Why don’t you look?”

She was fighting for her life. He started to his feet and came to her with his teeth set and his pupils fixed. “This is only the devil tempting me. Say your prayers, child!”

He grasped her left hand with his right. His grip almost overtaxed her strength and she felt faint. In an explosion of emotion the insane frenzy for destroying had come upon him again. He longed to give his feelings physical expression.

“Say them, say them!” he cried. “God sent me to kill you, Glory.”

A sensation of terror and of triumph came over her

at once. She half closed her eyes and threw her other arm around his neck. "No, but to love me! . . . Kiss me, John!"

Then a cry came from him like that of a man flinging himself over a precipice. He threw his arms about her, and her disordered hair fell over his face.

IX.

"I THOUGHT it was God's voice—it was the devil's!"

John Storm was creeping like a thief through the streets of London in the dark hours before the dawn. It was a peaceful night after the thunderstorm of the evening before. A few large stars had come out, a clear moon was shining, and the air was quiet after the cries, the crackling tumult, and all the fury of human throats. There was only the swift rattling of mail-cars running to the post-office, the heavy clank of country carts crawling to Covent Garden, the measured tread of policemen, and the muddled laughter of drunken men and women by the coffee-stands at the street corners. "'Ow's the deluge, myte? Not come off yet? Well, give us a cup of cawfee on the strength of it."

It seemed as if eyes looked down on him from the dark sky and pierced him through and through. His whole life had been an imposture from the first—his quarrel with his father, his taking Orders, his entering the monastery and his leaving it, his crusade in Soho, his intention of following Father Damien, his predictions at Westminster—all, all had been false and the expression of a lie! He was himself a sham, a mockery, a whited

sepulchre, and had grossly sinned against the light and against God.

But the spiritual disillusion had come at last, and it had revealed him to himself at an awful depth of self-deception. Thinking in his pride and arrogance he was the Divine messenger, the avenger, the man of God, he had set out to shed blood like any wretched criminal, any jealous murderer who was driven along by devilish passion. How the devil had played with him too! With him, who was dedicated by the most solemn and sacred vows! And he had been as stubble before the wind—as chaff that the storm carrieth away!

With such feelings of poignant anguish he plodded through the echoing streets. Mechanically he made his way back to Westminster. By the time he got there the moon and stars had gone, and the chill of daybreak was in the air. He saw and heard nothing, but as he crossed Broad Sanctuary a line of mounted police trotted past him with their swords clanking.

It was not yet daylight when he knocked at the door of his chambers under the church.

“Who’s there?” came in a fierce whisper.

“Open the door,” he said in a spiritless voice.

The door was opened, and Brother Andrew, with the affectionate whine of a dog who has been snarling at his master in the dark, said, “Oh, is it you, Father? I thought you were gone. Did you meet them? They’ve been searching for you everywhere all night long.”

He still spoke in whispers, as if someone had been ill. “I can’t light up. They’d be sure to see and perhaps come back. They’ll come in the morning in any case. Oh, it’s terrible! Worse than ever now! Haven’t

you heard what has happened? Somebody has been killed!"

John was struggling to listen, but everything seemed to be happening a long way off.

"Well, not killed exactly, but badly hurt, and taken to the hospital."

It was Charlie Wilkes. He had insulted the name of the Father, and Pincher the pawnbroker had knocked him down. His head had struck against the curb, and he had been picked up insensible. Then the police had come and Pincher had been taken off to the police station.

"But it's my mother I'm thinking of," said Brother Andrew, and he brushed his sleeve across his eyes. "You must get away at once, Father. They'll lay everything on you. What's to be done? Let me think! Let me think! How my head is going round and round! There's a train from Euston to the north at five in the morning, isn't there? You must catch that. Don't speak, Father! Don't say you won't."

"I will go," said John, with a look of utter dejection.

The change that had come over him since the day before startled the lay brother. "But I suppose you've been out all night. How tired you look! Can I get you anything?"

John did not answer, and the lay brother brought some brown bread and coaxed him to eat a little of it. The day was beginning to dawn.

"Now you must go, Father."

"And you, my lad?"

"Oh, I can take care of myself."

"Go back to the Brotherhood; take the dog with you——"

"The dog!" Brother Andrew seemed to be about to say something, but he checked himself, and with a wild look he muttered, "Oh, I know what *I'll* do. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye," said John, and then the broken man was back in the streets.

His nervous system had been exhausted by the events of the night, and when he entered the railway station he could scarcely put one foot before another. "Looks as if *he'd* had enough," said somebody behind him. He found an empty carriage and took his seat in the corner. A kind of stupor had come over his faculties, and he could neither think nor feel.

Three or four young men and boys were sorting and folding newspapers at a counter that stood on trestles before the closed-up bookstall. A placard slipped from the fingers of one of them, and fell on to the floor. John saw his own name in monster letters, and he began to ask himself what he was doing? Was he running away? It was cowardly, it was contemptible! And then it was so useless! He might go to the ends of the earth, yet he could not escape the only enemy it was worth while to fly from. That enemy was himself.

Suddenly he remembered that he had not taken his ticket, and he got out of the train. But instead of going to the ticket-office, he stood aside and tried to think what he ought to do. Then there was confusion and noise, people were hurrying past him, somebody was calling to him, and finally the engine whistled and the smoke rose to the roof. When he came to himself the train was gone, and he was standing on the platform alone.

"But what am I to do?" he asked himself.

It was a lovely summer morning, and the streets were empty and quiet. Little by little they became populous

and noisy, and at length he was walking in a crowd. It was nine o'clock by this time, and he was in the White-chapel Road, going along with a motley troop of Jews, Polish Jews, Germans, German Jews, and all the many tribes of cockneydom. Two costers behind him were talking and laughing.

"Lor' blesh you, it's jest abart enneff to myke a corpse laugh."

"Ain't it? An acqyuntince uv mine . . . d'ye know Jow 'Awkins? Him as kep' the frahd fish-shop off of Flower and Dean. Yus? Well, he sold his bit uv biziness lahst week for a song, thinkin' the world was acomin' to a end, and this morning I meets him on the 'Owben Viadeck lookin' as if 'e'd 'ad the smallpox or some-think!"

John Storm had scarcely heard them. He had a strange feeling that everything was happening hundreds of miles away.

"What am I to do?" he asked himself again. Between twelve and one o'clock he was back in the City, walking aimlessly on and on. He did not choose the unfrequented thoroughfares, and when people looked into his face he thought, "If anybody asks me who I am I'll tell him." It was eight hours since he had eaten anything, and he felt weak and faint. Coming upon a coffee-house, he went in and ordered food. The place was full of young clerks at their midday meal. Most of them were reading newspapers, which they had folded and propped up on the tables before them, but two who sat near were talking.

"These predictions of the end of the world are a mania, a monomania, which recurs at regular intervals of

the world's history," said one. He was a little man with a turned-up nose.

"But the strange thing is that people go on believing them," said his companion.

"That's not strange at all. This big, idiotic, amorphous London has no sense of humour. See how industriously it has been engaged for the last month in the noble art of making a fool of itself!" And then he looked round at John Storm, as if proud of his tall language.

John did not listen. He knew that everybody was talking about him, yet the matter did not seem to concern him now, but to belong to some other existence which his soul had had.

At length an idea came to him, and he thought he knew what he ought to do. He ought to go to the Brotherhood and ask to be taken back. But not as a son this time; only as a servant, to scour and scrub to the end of his life. There used to be a man to sweep out the church and ring the church-bell—he might be allowed to do menial work like that. He had proved false to his ideal, he had not been able to resist the lures of earthly love; but God was merciful, He would not utterly reject him.

His self-abasement was abject, yet several hours had passed before he attempted to carry out this design. It was the time of Evensong when he reached the church, and the brothers were singing their last hymn—

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

He stood by the porch and listened. The street was very quiet, hardly anybody was passing.

"Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storms of life be past."

His heart surged up to his throat, and he could scarcely bear the pain of it. Yes, yes, yes! Other refuge had he none!

Suddenly a new thought smote him, and he felt like a man roused from a deep sleep. Glory! He had been thinking only of his own soul and his soul's salvation, and had forgotten his duty to others. He had his duty to Glory above all others, and he could not and must not escape from it. He must take his place by her side, and if that included the abandonment of his ideals, so be it! He had been proved unworthy of a life of holiness; he must lower his flag; he must be content to live the life of a man.

But he could not think what he ought to do next, and when night fell he was still wandering aimlessly through the streets. He had turned eastward again, and even in the tumultuous thoroughfares of Mile End he could not help seeing that something unusual was going on. People in drink were rolling about the streets and shouting and singing, as if it had been a public holiday. "Glad you ain't in kingdom-come to-night, old gel!" "Well, what do *you* think?"

At twelve o'clock he went into a lodging-house and asked if he could have a bed. The keeper was in the kitchen talking with two men who were cooking a herring for their supper, and he looked up at his visitor in astonishment.

"Can I sleep you, sir? We ain't got no accommodation for gentlemen . . ." and then he stopped, looked more attentively, and said, "Are you from the Settlement, sir?"

John Storm made some inarticulate reply.

"Thort ye might be, sir. We often 'as 'em 'ere sem-

pling the cawfee, but bless'd if they ever wanted to semple a bed afore. Still, if *you* down't mind——"

"It will be better than I deserve, my man. Can you give me a cup of coffee before I turn in?"

"With pleasure, sir! Set down, sir! Myke yourself at 'ome. Me and my friends were jest talking of a gentleman of your cloth, sir—the pore feller as 'as got into trouble acrost Westminster way."

"Oh, you were talking of him, were you?"

"Sem 'ere says the biziness pyze."

"It *must* py, or people wouldn't do it," said the man leaning over the fire.

"Down't you believe it. That little gime down't py. 'Cause why? Look at the bloomin' stoo the feller's in now. If they ketch him 'e'll get six months 'ard."

"Then what's 'e been doin' it for? I down't see no-think in it if it down't py."

"'Cause he believes in it, thet's why! What do you think, sir?"

"I think the man has come by a just fall," said John. "God will never use him again, having brought him to shame."

"Must hev been a wrong un certingly," said the man over the fire.

When John Storm awoke in his cubicle next morning he saw his way clearer. He would deliver himself up to the warrant that was issued for his arrest, and go through with it to the end. Then he would return to Glory a free man, and God would find work for him even yet, after this awful lesson to his presumption and pride.

"Thet feller as was took ter the awspital is dead," said somebody in the kitchen, and then there was the crinkling of a newspaper.

"Is 'e?" said another. "The best thing the Father can do is to 'ook it, then. Cause why? W'ether 'e done it or not they'll fix it on ter 'im, doncher know."

John's head spun round and round. He remembered what Brother Andrew had said of Charlie Wilkes, and his heart, so warm a moment ago, felt benumbed as by frost. Nevertheless, at nine o'clock he was going westward in the Underground. People looked at him when he stepped into the carriage. He thought everybody knew him, and that the world was only playing with him as a cat plays with a mouse. The compartment was full of young clerks, smoking pipes and reading newspapers.

"Most extraordinary!" said one of them. "The fellow has disappeared as absolutely as if he had been carried up into a cloud."

"Why extraordinary?" said another, in a thin voice. This one was not smoking, and he had the startled eyes of the enthusiast. "Elijah was taken up to heaven in the body, wasn't he? And why not Father Storm?"

"What?" cried the first, taking his pipe out of his mouth.

"Some people believe that," said the thin voice timidly.

"Oh, you want a dose of medicine, you do," said the first speaker, shaking out his ash and looking round with a knowing air. The young men got out in the City. John went on to Westminster Bridge.

It was terrible. Why could he not take advantage of the popular superstition and disappear indeed, taking Glory with him? But no, no, no!

Through all the torment of his soul his religion had remained the same, and now it rose up before him like a pillar of cloud and fire. He would do as he had intended, whatever the consequences, and if he was charged

with crimes he had not committed, if he was accused of the offences of his followers, he would make no defence—if need be, he would allow himself to be convicted, and being innocent in this instance, God would accept his punishment as an atonement for his other sins! Glorious sacrifice! He would make it! And Glory herself would be proud of it some day.

With the glow of this resolution upon him he turned into Scotland Yard, and stepped boldly up to the office. The officer in charge received him with a deferential bow, but went on talking in a low voice to an inspector of police who was also standing at the other side of a counter.

"Strange!" he was saying. "I thought he was seen getting into the train at Euston."

"Don't know that he wasn't, either, in spite of all he says."

"Thinking of the dog?"

"Well, the dog, too," said the inspector, and then seeing John, "Helloa! Who's here?"

The officer stepped up to the counter. "What can I do for you, sir?" he asked.

John knew that the supreme moment had come, and he felt proud of himself that his resolution did not waver. Lifting his head, he said in a low and rapid voice, "I understand that you have a warrant for the arrest of Father Storm."

"We *had*, sir," the officer answered.

John looked embarrassed. "What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that Father Storm is now in custody."

John stared at the man with a feeling of stupefaction. "In custody? Did you say in custody?"

"Precisely. He has just given himself up!"

John answered impetuously, "But that is impossible."

"Why impossible, sir? Are you interested in this case?"

A certain quivering moved John's mouth. "I am Father Storm himself.

The officer was silent for a moment. Then he turned to the inspector with a pitying smile. "Another of them," he said significantly. The psychology of criminals had been an interesting study to this official.

"Wait a minute," said the inspector, and he went hurriedly through an inner doorway. The officer asked John some questions about his movements since yesterday. John answered vaguely in broken and rather bewildering sentences. Then the inspector returned.

"You are Father Storm?"

"Yes."

"Do you know of anybody who might wish to personate you?"

"God forbid that anyone should do that."

"Still there is someone here who says——"

"Let me see him."

"Come this way, quietly," said the inspector, and John followed him to the inner room. His pride was all gone, his head was hanging low, and he was a prey to extraordinary agitation.

A man in a black cassock was sitting at a table making a statement to another officer, with an open book before him. His back was to the door, but John knew him in a moment. It was Brother Andrew.

"Then why have you given yourself up?" the officer asked, and Brother Andrew began a rambling and foolish explanation. He had seen it stated in an evening paper

that the Father had been traced to the train at Euston, and he thought it a pity . . . a pity that the police . . . that the police should waste their time——”

“Take care!” said the officer. “You are in a position that should make you careful of what you say.”

And then the inspector stepped forward, leaving John by the door.

“You still say you are Father Storm?”

“Of course I do,” said Brother Andrew indignantly. “If I was anybody else, do you think I should come here and give myself up?”

“Then who is this standing behind you?”

Brother Andrew turned and saw John with a start of surprise and a cry of terror. He seemed hardly able to believe in the reality of what was before him, and his restless eyeballs rolled fearfully. John tried to speak, but he could only utter a few inarticulate sounds.

“Well?” said the inspector. And while John stood with head down and heaving breast, Brother Andrew began to laugh hysterically and to say—

“Don’t you know who this is? This is my lay brother. I brought him out of the Brotherhood six months ago; and he has been with me ever since.”

The officers looked at each other. “Good heavens!” cried Brother Andrew in an imperious voice, “don’t you believe me? You mustn’t touch this man. He has done nothing—nothing at all. He is as tender as a woman, and wouldn’t hurt a fly. What’s he doing here?”

The officers also were dropping their heads, and the heartrending voice went on, “Have you arrested him? You’ll do very wrong if you arrest . . . But perhaps he has given himself up! That would be just like him. He is devoted to me, and would tell you any falsehood if

he thought it would . . . But you must send him away . . . Tell him to go back to his old mother—that's the proper place for him. Good God! do you think I'm telling you lies?"

There was silence for a moment. "My poor lad, hush, hush!" said John, in a tone full of tenderness and authority. Then he turned to the inspector with a pitiful smile of triumph. "Are you satisfied?" he asked.

"Quite satisfied, Father," the officer answered in a broken voice; and then Brother Andrew began to cry.

X.

WHEN Glory awoke on the morning after the Derby and thought of John, she felt no remorse. A sea of bewildering difficulty lay somewhere ahead, but she would not look at it. He loved her, she loved him, and nothing else mattered. If rules and vows stood between them, so much the worse for such enemies of love.

She was conscious that a subtle change had come over her. She was not herself any longer, but somebody else as well; not a woman merely, but in some sort a man; not Glory only, but also John Storm. Oh, delicious mystery! Oh, joy of joys! His arms seemed to be about her waist still, and his breath to linger about her neck. With a certain tremor, a certain thrill, she reached for a handglass, and looked at herself to learn if there was any difference in her face that the rest of the world would see. Yes, her eyes had another lustre, a deeper light, but she lay back in the cool bed with a smile and a long-drawn sigh. What matter whatever

happened? Gone were the six cruel months in which she had awakened every morning with a pain at her breast. She was happy, happy, happy!

The morning sun was streaming across the room when Liza came in with the tea.

"Did ye see the Farver last night, Miss Gloria?"

"Oh, yes; that was all right, Liza."

The day's newspaper was lying folded on the tray. She took it up and opened it, remembering the Derby, and thinking for the first time of Drake's triumph. But what caught her eye in glaring headlines was a different matter—"The Panic Terror: Collapse of the Farce."

It was a shriek of triumphant derision. The fateful day had come and gone, yet London stood where it did before! Last night's tide had flowed and ebbed, and the dwellings of men were not submerged. No earthquake had swallowed up St. Paul's; no mighty bonfire of the greatest city of the world had lit up the sky of Europe, and even the thunderstorm which had broken over London had only laid the dust and left the air more clear.

"London is to be congratulated on the collapse of this panic, which, so far as we can hear, has been attended by only one casualty—an assault in Brown's Square, Westminster, on a young soldier, Charles Wilkes, of the Wellington Barracks, by two of the frantic army of the terror-stricken. The injured man was removed to St. Thomas's Hospital, while his assailants were taken to Rochester Row Police Station; and we have only to regret that the clerical panic-maker himself has not yet shared the fate of his followers. Late last night the authorities, recovering from their extraordinary supineness, issued a warrant for his arrest, but up to the time of going to press he had escaped the vigilance of the police."

Glory was breathing audibly as she read, and Liza, who was drawing up the blind, looked back at her with surprise.

"Liza, have you mentioned to anybody that Father Storm was here last night?"

"Why, no, miss; there ain't nobody stirrin' yet, and besides——"

"Then don't mention it to a soul. Will you do me that great, great kindness?"

"Down't ye know I will, mum?" said Liza, with a twinkle of the eye and a wag of the head.

Glory dressed hurriedly, went down to the drawing-room and wrote a letter. It was to Sefton, the manager. "Do not expect me to play to-night. I don't feel up to it. Sorry to be so troublesome."

Then Rosa came in with another newspaper in her hand, and, without saying anything, Glory showed her the letter. Rosa read it and returned it in silence. They understood each other.

During the next few hours Glory's impatience became feverish, and as soon as the first of the evening papers appeared she sent out for it. The panic was subsiding, and the people who had gone to the outskirts were returning to the city in troops, looking downcast and ashamed. No news of Father Storm. Inquiry that morning at Scotland Yard elicited the fact that nothing had yet been heard of him. There was much perplexity as to where he had spent the previous night.

Glory's face tingled and burned. From hour to hour she sent out for new editions. The panic itself was now eclipsed by the interest of John Storm's disappearance. His followers scouted the idea that he had fled from London. Nevertheless he had fallen. As a pretender to

the gift of prophecy his career was at an end, and his crazy system of mystical divinity was the laughing-stock of London.

"It does not surprise us that this second Moses, this mock Messiah, has broken down. Such men always do, and must collapse, but that the public should ever have taken seriously a movement which . . ." and then a grotesque list of John's followers—one pawnbroker, one waiter, one "knocker-up," two or three apprentices, &c.

As she read all this Glory was at the same time glowing with shame, trembling with fear, and burning with indignation. She dined with Rosa alone, and they tried to talk of other matters. The effort was useless. At last Rosa said—

"I have to follow this thing up for the paper, dear, and I'm going to-night to see if they hold the usual service in his church."

"May I go with you?"

"If you wish to, but it will be useless—he won't be there."

"Why not?"

"The Prime Minister left London last night—I can't help thinking there is something in that."

"He will be there, Rosa. He's not the man to run away. I know him," said Glory proudly.

The church was crowded, and it was with difficulty they found seats. John's enemies were present in force—all the owners of vested interests, who had seen their livelihood threatened by the man who declared war on vice and its upholders. There was a dangerous atmosphere before the service began, and, notwithstanding her brave faith in him, Glory found herself praying that John Storm might not come. As the organ played and the choir and

clergy entered the excitement was intense, and some of the congregation got on to their seats in their eagerness to see if the Father was there. He was not there. The black cassock and biretta in which he had lately preached were nowhere to be seen, and a murmur of disappointment passed over friends and enemies alike.

Then came a disgraceful spectacle. A man with a bloated face and a bandage about his forehead rose in his place and cried, "No Popery, boys!" Straightway the service, which was being conducted by two of the clerical brothers from the Brotherhood, was interrupted by hissing, whistling, shouting, yelling, and whooping indescribable. Songs were roared out during the lessons, and cushions, hassocks and prayer-books were flung at the altar and its furniture. The terrified choir boys fled downstairs to their own quarters, and the clergy were driven out of the church.

John's own people stole away in terror and shame, but Glory leapt to her feet as if to fling herself on the cowardly rabble. Her voice was lost in the tumult, and Rosa drew her out into the street.

"Is there no law in the land to prevent brawling like this?" she cried, but the police paid no heed to her.

Then the congregation, which had broken up, came rushing out of the church and round to the door leading to the chambers beneath it.

"They've found him," thought Glory, pressing her hand over her heart. But no, it was another matter. Immediately afterwards there rose over the babel of human voices the deep music of the bloodhound in full cry. The crowd shrieked with fear and delight, then surged and parted, and the dog came running through, with its stern up, its head down, its forehead wrinkled,

and the long drapery of its ears and flews hanging in folds about its face. In a moment it was gone, its mellow note was dying away in the neighbouring streets, and a gang of ruffians were racing after it. "That'll find the feller if he's in London," somebody shouted—it was the man with the bandaged forehead—and there were yells of fiendish laughter.

Glory's head was going round, and she was holding on to Rosa's arm with a convulsive grasp.

"The cowards!" she cried. "To use that poor creature's devotion to his master for their own inhuman ends—it's cowardly, it's brutal, it's——Oh, oh, oh!"

"Come, dear," said Rosa, and she dragged Glory away.

They went back through Broad Sanctuary. Neither spoke, but both were thinking, "He has gone to the monastery. He intends to stay there until the storm is over." At Westminster Bridge they parted. "I have somewhere to go," said Rosa, turning down to the Underground. "She is going to Bishopsgate Street," thought Glory, and they separated with constraint.

Returning to Clement's Inn, Glory found a letter from Drake:—

"DEAR GLORY,—How can I apologise to you for my detestable behaviour of last night? The memory of what passed has taken all the joy out of the success upon which everybody is congratulating me. I have tried to persuade myself that you would make allowances for the day and the circumstances, and my natural excitement. But your life has been so blameless that it fills me with anguish and horror to think how I exposed you to misrepresentation by allowing you to go to that place, and

by behaving to you as I did when you were there. Thank God, things went no farther, and some blessed power prevented me from carrying out my threat to follow you. Believe me, you shall see no more of men like Lord Robert Ure and women like his associates. I despise them from my heart, and wonder how I can have tolerated them so long. Do let me beg the favour of a line consenting to allow me to call and ask your forgiveness.—
Yours most humbly, F. H. N. DRAKE."

Glory slept badly that night, and as soon as Liza was stirring she rang for the newspaper.

"Didn't ye 'ear the dorg, mum?" said Liza.

"What dog?"

"The Farver's dorg. It was scratching at the front dower afore I was up this morning. 'It's the milk,' sez I. But the minute I opened the dower up it came ter the drawerin' room and went snuffling rahnd everywhere."

"Where is it now?"

"Gorn, mum."

"Did anybody else see it? No? You say no? You're sure? Then say nothing about it, Liza—nothing whatever—that's a good girl."

The newspaper was full of the mysterious disappearance. Not a trace of the Father had yet been found. The idea had been started that he had gone into seclusion at the Anglican monastery with which he was associated, but on inquiry at Bishopsgate Street it was found that nothing had been seen of him there. Since yesterday the whole of London had been scoured by the police, but not one fact had been brought to light to make clearer the mystery of his going away. With the most noticeable face and habit in London, he had evaded

scrutiny and gone into a retirement which baffled discovery. No master of the stage art could have devised a more sensational disappearance. He had vanished as though whirled to heaven in a cloud, and that was literally what the more fanatical of his followers believed to have been his fate. Among these persons there were wild-eyed hangers-on telling of a flight upwards on a fiery chariot, as well as a predicted reappearance after three days. Such were the stories being gulped down by the thousands who still clung with an undefinable fascination to the memory of the charlatan. Meantime the soldier Wilkes had died of his injuries, and the coroner's inquiry was to be opened that day.

"Unfeeling brutes! The bloodhound is an angel of mercy compared to them," thought Glory; but the worst sting was in the thought that John had fled out of fear, and was now in hiding somewhere.

Towards noon the newsboys were rushing through the Inn, crying their papers against all regulations, and at the same moment Rosa came in to say that John Storm had surrendered.

"I knew it!" cried Glory. "I knew he would!"

Then Rosa told her of Brother Andrew's attempt to personate his master, and with what pitiful circumstances it had ended.

"Only a lay brother, you say, Rosa?"

"Yes, a poor half-witted soul apparently—must have been, to imagine a subterfuge like that would succeed in London."

Glory's eyes were gleaming. "Rosa," she said, "I would rather have done what he did than play the greatest part in all the world."

She wished to be present at the trial, and proposed to Rosa that she should go with her.

"But dare you, my child? Considering your old friendship, dare you see him——"

"Dare I?" said Glory. "Dare I stand in the dock by his side!"

But when she got to Bow Street, and saw the crowds in the court, the line of distinguished persons of both sexes allowed to sit on the bench, the army of reporters and newspaper artists, and all the mass of smiling and eager faces without ruth or pity, gathered together as for a show, her heart sickened and she crept out of the place before the prisoner was brought into the dock.

Walking to and fro in the corridor, she waited the result of the trial. It was not a long one. The charge was that of causing persons to assemble unlawfully to the danger of the public peace. There was no defence. A man with a bandaged forehead was the first witness. He was a publican who lived in Brown's Square, and had been a friend of the soldier Wilkes. The injury to his forehead was the result of a blow from a stick given by the prisoner's lay brother on the night of the Derby, when, with the help of the deceased, he had attempted to liberate the bloodhound. He had much to say of the Father's sermons, his speeches, his predictions, his slanders, and his disloyalty. Other witnesses were Pincher and Hawkins. They were in a state of abject fear at the fate hanging over their own heads, and tried to save their own skins by laying all the blame upon the Father. The last witness was Brother Andrew, and he broke down utterly. Within an hour Rosa came out to say that John Storm had been committed for trial. Bail was

not asked for, and the prisoner, who had not uttered a word from first to last, had been taken back to the cells.

Glory hurried home and shut herself in her room. The news-boys in the street were shouting, "Father Storm in the dock," and filling the air with their cries. She covered her ears with her hands and made noises in her throat that she might not hear.

John Storm's career was at an end. It was all her fault. If she had yielded to his desire to leave London, or if she had joined him there, how different everything must have been. But she had broken in upon his life and wrecked it. She had sinned against him who had given her everything that one human soul can give another.

Liza came up with red eyes, bringing the evening papers and a letter. The papers contained long reports of the trial, and short editorials reproving the public for its interest in such a poor impostor. Some of them contained sketches of the prisoner and of the distinguished persons recognised in court. "The stage was represented by ——" and then a caricature of herself.

The letter was from Aunt Rachel:—

"MY DEAR, MY BEST-BELOVED GLORY,—I know how much your kind *heart* will be lowered by the painful tidings I have to write to you. Lord Storm died on Monday and was buried to-day. To the last he declared he would never consent to make peace with John, and he has left nothing to him but his title, so that our dear friend is now a nobleman without an estate. Everybody about the old lord at the end was unanimous in favour of his son, but he would not listen to them, and the scene at the death-bed was shocking. It seems that, with

his dying breath and many bursts of laughter, he read aloud his will, which ordered that his effects should be sold, and the proceeds given to some society for the protection of the Established Church. And then he told old Chalse that as soon as he was gone a coffin was to be got, and he was to be screwed down at once, 'for,' said he, 'my son would not come to see me *living*, and he shan't stand grinning at me *dead*.' The funeral was at Kirkpatrick this morning, and *few* came to see the last of one who had left none to mourn him; but just as the remains were being deposited in the dark vault, a carriage drove up and an elderly gentleman got out. No one knew him, and he stood and looked down with his impassive face while the service was being read, and then without speaking to anyone he got back into the carriage and drove away. The *minute* he was gone I told Anna he was somebody of consequence, and then everybody said it must be Lord Storm's brother, and no less a person than the Prime Minister of England. It seems that the sale is to come off immediately, so that Knockaloe will be a waste, as if sown with salt, and, so far as this island is concerned, all trace of the Storms, father and son, will be gone for good. I ever knew it must end thus! But I will more particularly tell you everything when we meet again, which I hope may be *soon*. Meantime I need not say how much I am, my dear child, your ever fond, nay, more than fond, *devoted* auntie

RACHEL."

XI.

"YES," said Rosa across the dinner-table, "the sudden fall of a man who has filled a large space in the public eye is always pitiful. It is like the fall of a great tree in the forest. One never realised how big it was until it was down."

"It's awful—awful!" said Glory.

"Whether one liked the man or not, such a downfall seems hard to reconcile with the idea of a beneficent Providence."

"Hard? Impossible, you mean!"

"Glory!"

"Oh, I'm only a pagan and always have been, but I can't believe in a God that does nothing—I won't, I won't!"

"Still we can't see the end yet. After the cross the resurrection, as the Church folks say, and who knows but out of all this——"

"What's to become of his church?"

"Oh, there'll be people enough to see to that, and if the dear Archdeacon . . . But he's busy with Mrs. Macrae, bless him! She has gone to wreck at last, and is living hidden away in a farmhouse somewhere that she may drink herself to death without detection and interruption. But the Archdeacon and Lord Robert have found her out, and there they are hovering round like two vultures waiting for the end."

"And his orphanage?"

"Ah, that's another pair of shoes altogether, dear. Being an institution that asks for an income instead of giving one, there'll be nobody too keen to take it over."

"O God! O God! What a world it is!" cried Glory.

After dinner she went off to Westminster in search of the orphanage. It stood on a corner of the church square. The door was closed and the windows of the ground-floor were shuttered. With difficulty she obtained admission and access to the person in charge. This was an elderly lady in a black silk dress and with 'snow-white hair.

"I'm no the matron, miss," she said. "The matron's gone, fled awa like a' the lave o' the grand Sisters, thinking sure the mob would mak' this house their next point of attack."

"Then I know who *you* are; you're Mrs. Callender," said Glory.

"Jane Callender I am, young leddy. And who may ye be yersel'?"

"I'm a friend of John's, and I want to know if there's anything——"

"You're no the lassie hersel', are ye? You are, though. I see fine you are. Come, kiss me—again, lassie! Oh dear, oh dear! And to think we must be meeting same as this! For a' the world it's like clasping hands ower the puir laddie's grave."

They cried in each other's arms, and then both felt better.

"And the children," said Glory. "Who's looking after them if the matron and Sisters are gone?"

"Just me and the puir bairns theirsels, and the wee maid of all wark that opened the door til ye. But come your ways and look at them."

The dormitory was in an upper storey. Mrs. Callender had opened the door softly, and Glory stepped into a large dark room in which fifty children lay asleep.

Their breathing was all that could be heard, and it seemed to fill the air as with the rustle of a gentle breeze. But it was hard to look upon them and to think of their only earthly father in his cell. With full hearts and dry throats the two women returned to a room below.

By this time the square, which before had only shown people standing in doorways and lounging at street corners, was crowded with a noisy rabble. They were shouting out indecent jokes about "monks," "his reverend lordship," and "doctors of divinity;" and a small gang of them had got a rope which they were trying to throw as a lasso round a figure of the Virgin in a niche over the porch. The figure came down at length amid shrieks of delight, and when the police charged the mob they flung stones which broke the church windows.

Again Glory felt an impulse to throw herself on the cowardly rabble, but she only crouched at the window by the side of Mrs. Callender, and looked down at the sea of faces below with their evil eyes and cruel mouths.

"Oh, what a thing it is to be a woman!" she moaned.

"Aye, lassie, aye, there's mair than ane of us has felt that," said Mrs. Callender.

Glory did not speak again as long as they knelt by the window holding each other's hands, but the tears that had sprung to her eyes at the thought of her helplessness dried up of themselves, and in their place came the light of a great resolution. She knew that her hour had struck at last—that this was the beginning of the end.

The theatres were emptying and carriages were rolling away from them as she drove home by way of the Strand. She saw her name on omnibuses and her picture on hoardings, and felt a sharp pang. But she was in a

state of feverish excitement, and the pain was gone in a moment.

Another letter from Drake was waiting for her at the Inn:—

“I feel, my dear Glory, that you are entirely justified in your silence; but to show you how deep is my regret, I am about to put it in my power to atone, as far as I can, for the conduct which has quite properly troubled and hurt you. You will put me under an eternal obligation if you will consent to become my wife. We should be friends as well as lovers, Glory, and in an age distinguished for brilliant and beautiful women, it would be the crown of my honour that my wife was above all a woman of genius. Nothing should disturb the development of your gifts, and if any social claims conflicted with them, they, and not you, would suffer. For the rest, I can bring you nothing, dear, but—thanks to the good father who was born before me—such advantages as belong to wealth. But so far as these go there is no pleasure you need deny yourself, and if your sympathies are set on any good work for humanity, there is no opportunity you may not command. With this I can only offer you the love and devotion of my whole heart and soul, which now wait in fear and pain for your reply.”

Glory read this letter with a certain quivering of the eyelids, but she put it away without a qualm. Nevertheless, the letter was hard to reply to, and she made many attempts without satisfying herself in the end. There was a note of falsehood in all of them, and she felt troubled and ashamed.

“When I remember how good you have been to me from the first, I could cry to think of the answer I must give you. But I can’t help it—Oh, I can’t, I can’t! Don’t

think me ungrateful, and don't suppose I am angry or in any way hurt or offended, but to do what you desire is impossible—quite, quite impossible. Oh, if you only knew what it is to deny myself the future you offer me, to turn my back on the gladness with which life has come to me, to strip all these roses from my hair, you would believe it must be a far, far higher call than to worldly rank and greatness that I am listening to at last. And it is. A woman may trifle with her heart while the one she loves is well and happy or great and prosperous; but when he is down and the cruel world is trampling on him, there can be no paltering with it any longer. . . . Yes, I must go to *him* if I go to anybody. Besides, you can do without me and he cannot. You have all the world and he has nothing but me. If you were a woman you would understand all this; but you are loyal and brave and true, and when I look at your letter and remember how often you have spoken up for a fallen man, my heart quivers and my eyes grow dim, and I know what it means to be an English gentleman.”

After writing this letter, she went up to her bedroom and busied herself there for an hour, making up parcels of her clothing and jewellery, and labelling them with envelopes bearing names. The plainer costumes she addressed to Aunt Anna, a fur-lined jacket to Aunt Rachel, an opera-cloak to Rosa, and a quantity of underclothing to Liza. All her jewels, and nearly all the silver trinkets from the dressing-table, were made up in a parcel by themselves, and addressed back to the giver—Sir Francis Drake.

The clock of St. Clement Danes was chiming midnight when this was done, and she stood a moment and

asked herself, "Is there anything else?" Then there was a slippèd foot on the stair, and somebody knocked.

"It's only me, miss, and can I do anythink for ye?"

Glory opened the door and found Liza there, half-dressed, and looking as if she had been crying.

"Nothing Liza; nothing, thank you. But why aren't you in bed?"

"I can't sleep a blessed wink to-night somehow, Miss," said Liza. And then, looking into the room, "But are ye goin' away somewhere, Miss Gloria?"

"Yes, perhaps."

"Thort ye was—I could hear ye downstairs."

"Not far, though—just a little journey. Go back to bed now. Good-night!"

"Good-night, Miss, and Liza went down with lingering footsteps.

Half-an-hour or so afterwards, Glory heard Rosa come in from the office, and pass up to her bedroom on the floor above. "Dear unselfish soul!" she thought, and then she sat down to write another letter.

"DARLING ROSA,—I am going to leave you, but there is no help for it—I must. Don't you remember I used to say if I should ever find a man who was willing to sacrifice all the world for me, I would leave everything and follow him? I have found him, dear, and he has not only sacrificed all the world for my sake, but trampled on heaven itself. I can't go to him now—would to heaven I could—but neither can I go on living this present life any longer. So I am turning my back on it all, exactly as I said I would—the world, so sweet and so cruel; art,

so beautiful and so difficult, and even 'the clapping of hands in a theatre.' You will say I am a donkey, and so I may be, but it must be a descendant of Balaam's old friend, who knew the way she ought to go.

"Forgive me that I am going without saying good-bye. It is enough to have to resist the battering of one's own doubts without encountering your dear solicitations. And forgive me that I am not telling you where I am going and what is to become of me. You will be questioned and examined, and I feel as much frightened of being overtaken by my old existence as the poor simpleton who took it into his head that he was a grain of barley, and as often as he saw a cock or a hen he ran for his life. Thank you, dearest, for allowing me to share your sweet rooms with you, for the bright hours we have spent in them, and all the merry jaunts we have had together. There will be fewer creature comforts where I am going to, and my feet will not be so quick to do evil, which will at least be a saving of shoe-leather.

"Good-bye, old girl—loyal, unselfish, devoted friend! God will reward you yet, and a good man who has been chasing a will-o'-the-wisp will open his eyes to see that all the time the star of the morning has been by his side. To-morrow, when I leave the house, I know I shall want to run up and kiss you as you lie asleep, but I mustn't do that—the little druggeted stairs to your room would be like the road to another but not a better place, which is also paved with good intentions. What a scatterbrain I am! My heart is breaking, too, with all this severing of my poor little riven cords.—Your foolish old chummie (the last of her),

GLORY.

Next morning, almost as soon as it was light, she rose and drew a little tin box from under the bed. It was the box that had brought all her belongings to London when she first came from her island home. Out of this box she took a simple grey costume—the costume she had bought for outdoor wear when a nurse at the hospital. Putting it on, she looked at herself in the glass. The plain grey figure, so unlike what she had been the night before, sent a little stab to her heart, and she sighed.

“But this is Glory, after all,” she thought. “This is the granddaughter of my grandfather, the daughter of my father, and not the visionary woman who has been masquerading in London so long.” But the conceit did not comfort her very much, and scalding tear-drops began to fall.

Tying up some other clothing into a little bundle, she opened the door and listened. There was no noise in the house, and she crept downstairs with a light tread. At the drawing-room she paused, and took one last look round at the place where she had spent so many exciting hours, and lived through such various phases of life. While she stood on the threshold there was a sound of heavy breathing. It came from the pug, which lay coiled up on the sofa asleep. Reproaching herself with having forgotten the little thing, she took it up in her arms, and hushed it when it awoke and began to whine. Then she crept down to the front door, opened it softly, passed out, and closed it after her. There was a click of the lock in the silent gardens, and then no sound anywhere but the chirrup of the sparrows in the eaves.

The sun was beginning to climb over the cool and quiet streets as she went along, and some cabmen at the

stand looked over at the woman in nurse's dress, with the little bundle in one hand and the dog under the arm. "Been to a death, p'raps. Some uv these nurses, they've tender 'earts, bless 'em, and when I was in the 'awspital . . ." But she turned her head and hurried on, and the voice was lost in the empty air.

As she dipped into the slums of Westminster the sun gleamed on her wet face, and a group of noisy, happy girls, going to their work in the jam-factories of Soho, came towards her laughing.

The girls looked at the Sister as she passed; their tongues stopped and there was a hush.

XII.

JOHN STORM'S enemies had succeeded. He was committed for sedition, and there was the probability that he would be brought up again and charged with complicity in manslaughter. Throughout the proceedings at the police-court he maintained a calm and dignified silence. Supported by an exalted faith, he regarded even death with composure. When the trial was over and the policeman who stood at the back of the dock tapped him on the arm, he started like a man whose mind had been occupied with other issues.

"Eh?"

"Come," said the policeman, and he was taken back to the cells.

Next day he was removed to Holloway, and there he observed the same calm and silent attitude. His bearing touched and impressed the authorities, and they tried by various small kindnesses to make his imprisonment easy. He encouraged them but little.

On the second morning an officer came to his cell and said, "Perhaps you would care to look at the newspaper, Father?"

"Thank you, no," he answered. "The newspapers were never much to me even when I was living in the world—they cannot be necessary now that I am going out of it."

"Oh, come, you exaggerate your danger. Besides, now that the papers contain so much about yourself——"

"That is a reason why I should not see them."

"Well, to tell you the truth, Father, this morning's paper has something about somebody else, and that was why I brought it."

"Eh?"

"Somebody near to you—very near and . . . But I'll leave it with you . . . Nothing to complain of this morning?—no?"

But John Storm was already deep in the columns of the newspaper. He found the news intended for him. It was the death of his father. The paragraph was cruel and merciless. "Thus the unhappy man who was brought up at Bow Street two days ago is now a peer in his own right and the immediate heir to an earldom."

The moment was a bitter and terrible one. Memories of past years swept over him—half-forgotten incidents of his boyhood, when his father was his only friend and he walked with his hand in his—memories of his father's love for him, his hopes, his aims, his ambitions, and all the vast ado of his poor delusive dreams. And then came thoughts of the broken old man dying alone, and of himself in his prison cell. It had been a strangely familiar thought to him of late that if he left London at seven in the morning he could speak to his father at seven the same night. And now his father was gone, the last opportunity was lost, and he could speak to him no more.

But he tried to conquer the call of blood which he had put aside so long, and to set over against it the claims of his exalted mission and the spirit of the teaching of Christ. What had Christ said? "Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven!"

"Yes," he thought, "that's it—'for one is your Father, which is in heaven.'"

Then he took up the newspaper again, thinking to read with a calmer mind the report of his father's death and burial, but his eye fell on a different matter:—

"ANOTHER MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.—Hardly has the public mind recovered from the perplexity attending the disappearance of a well-known clergyman from Westminster, when the news comes of a no less mysterious disappearance of a popular actress from a West-End theatre."

It was Glory!

"Although a recent acquisition to the stage and the latest English actress to come into her heritage of fame, she was already a universal favourite, and her sudden and unaccountable disappearance is a shock as well as a surprise. To the disappointment of the public, she had not played her part for nearly a week, having excused herself on the ground of indisposition, but there was apparently nothing in the state of her health to give cause for anxiety or to prepare her friends for the step she has taken. What has become of her appears to be entirely beyond conjecture, but her colleagues and associates are still hoping for the best, though the tone of a letter left behind gives only too much reason to fear a sad and perhaps fatal sequel."

When the officer entered the cell again an hour after his first visit, John Storm was pallid and thin and grey. The sublime faith he had built up for himself had fallen to ruins, a cloud had hidden the face of the Father which is in heaven, and the death he had waited for as

the crown of his life seemed to be no better than an abject end to a career that had failed.

"Cheer up," said the officer; "I've some good news for you, at all events."

The prisoner smiled sadly and shook his head.

"Bail was offered and accepted at Bow Street this morning, and you will be at liberty to leave us to-day."

"When?" said John, and his manner changed immediately.

"Well, not just yet, you know."

"For the love of God, let me go at once. I have something to do—somebody to look for and find."

"Still, for your own security, Father——"

"But why?"

"Then you don't know that the mob sent a dog out in search for you?"

"No, I didn't know that, but if all the dogs of Christendom——"

"There are worse dogs waiting for you than any that go on four legs, you know."

"That's nothing, nothing at all, and if bail has been accepted surely it is your duty to liberate me at once. I claim—I demand that you should do so."

The officer raised his eyes in astonishment. "You surprise me, Father. After your calmness and patience and submission to authority too!"

John Storm remained silent for a moment, and then he said with a touching solemnity, "You must forgive me. You are very good—everybody is good to me here. Still, I am not afraid, and if you can let me go——"

The officer left him. It was several hours before he returned. By this time the long summer day had closed in, and it was quite dark.

"They think you've gone. You can leave now. Come this way."

At the door of the office, some minutes afterwards, John Storm paused with the officer's hand in his and said—

"Perhaps it is needless to ask who is my bail" (he was thinking of Mrs. Callender), "but if you can tell me——"

"Certainly. It was Sir Francis Drake."

John Storm bowed gravely and turned away. As he passed out of the yard his eyes were bent on the ground and his step was slow and feeble.

At that moment Drake was on his way to the Corinthian Club. Early in the afternoon he had seen this letter in the columns of an evening paper:—

"THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCES.—Is it not extraordinary that in discussing 'the epidemic of mystery' which now fills the air of London, it has apparently never occurred to anyone that the two mysterious disappearances which are the text of so many sermons may be really one disappearance only; that the 'man of God' and the 'woman of the theatre' may have acted in collusion, from the same impulse and with the same expectation, and that the rich and beneficent person who (according to latest reports) has come to the rescue of the one, and is an active agent in looking for the other, is in reality the foolish though well-meaning victim of both?—R. U."

For three hours Drake had searched for Lord Robert, with flame in his eyes and fury in his looks. Going first

to Belgrave Square, he had found the blinds down and the house shut up. Mrs. Macrae was dead. She had died at a lodging in the country, alone and unattended. Her wealth had not been able to buy the devotion of one faithful servant at the end. She had left nothing to her daughter except a remonstrance against her behaviour, but she had made Lord Robert her chief heir and sole executor.

That amiable mourner had returned to London with all possible despatch, as soon as the breath was out of his mother-in-law's body and arrangements were made for its transit. He was now engaged in relieving the tension of so much unusual emotion by a round of his nightly pleasures. Drake had come up with him at last.

The Corinthian Club was unusually gay that night. "Helloa, there!" came from every side. The music in the ballroom was louder than ever, and, judging by the number of the dancers, the attraction of "Tra-la-la" was even greater than before. There was the note of yet more reckless license everywhere, as if that little world whose life was pleasure had been under the cloud of a temporary terror, and was determined to make up for it by the wildest folly. The men chaffed and laughed, and shouted comic songs and kicked their legs about; the women drank and giggled.

Lord Robert was in the supper-room with three guests, the "Three Graces." The women were in full evening-dress. Betty was wearing the ring she had taken from Polly, "just to remember her by, pore thing," and the others were blazing in similar brilliants. The wretched man himself was half drunk. He had been talking of Father Storm and of his own wife in a jaunty tone, behind which there was an intensity of hatred.

"But this panic of his, don't you know, was the funniest thing ever heard of. Going home that night, I counted seventeen people on their knees in the streets—'pon my soul, I did! Eleven old women of eighty, two or three of seventy, and one or two that might be as young as sixty-nine. Then the epidemic of piety in high life, too! Several of our millionaires gave sixpence apiece to beggars—were seen to do it, don't you know. One old girl gave up playing baccarat and subscribed to 'Darkest England.' No end of sweet little women confessed their pretty weaknesses to their husbands, and now that the world is wagging along as merrily as before, they don't know what the devil they are to do. . . . But, look here!"

Out of his trouser pockets at either side he tugged a torn and crumpled assortment of letters, and proceeded to tumble them on to the table.

"These are a few of the applications I had from curates-in-charge and such beauties for the care of the living in Westminster while the other gentleman lay in jail. It's the Bishop's right to appoint the creature, don't you know, but they think a patron's recommendation . . . Oh, they're a sweet team! Listen to this—'May it please your lordship——'"

And then in mock tones, flourishing one hand, the man read aloud, amid the various noises of the place—the pop of champagne bottles and the rumble of the dancing in the room below—the fulsome letters he had received from clergymen. The wretched women, in their paint and patches, shrieked with laughter.

It was at that moment Drake came up, looking pale and fierce.

"Helloa, there! Is it you? Sit down, and take a glass of fizz."

"Not at this table," said Drake; "I prefer to drink with friends."

Lord Robert's eyes glistened and he tried to smile. "Really? Thought I was counted in that distinguished company, don't you know."

"So you were; but I've come to see that a friend who is not a friend is always the worst enemy."

"What do you mean?"

"What does that mean?" said Drake, throwing the paper on to the table.

"Well, what of it?"

"The initials to that letter are yours, and all the men I meet tell me that you have written it."

"They do, do they? Well?"

"I won't ask you if you did or if you didn't."

"Don't, dear boy."

"But I'll require you to disown it publicly, and at once."

"And if I won't—what then?"

"Then I'll tell the public for myself that it's a lie—a cowardly and contemptible lie, and that the man who wrote it is a cur."

"Oho! So it's like that, is it?" said Lord Robert, rising to his feet as if putting himself on guard.

"Yes, it *is* like that, Lord Robert Ure, because the woman who is slandered in that letter is as innocent as your own wife, and ten thousand times as pure as those who are your constant company."

Lord Robert's angular and ugly face glistened with a hateful smile. "Innocent!" he cried hoarsely, and then he laughed out loud. "Go on! It's rippin' to hear you, dear boy! Innocent, by God! Just as innocent as any other ballet-girl who is dragged through the stews of

London, and then picked up at last by the born fool who keeps her for another man."

"You liar!" cried Drake, and, like a flash of light, he had shot his fist across the table and struck the man full in the face. Then laying hold of the table itself, he swept it away with all that was on it, and sprang at Lord Robert and took him by the throat.

"Take that back, will you? Take it back!"

"I won't," cried Lord Robert, writhing and struggling in his grip.

"Then take that—and that—and that—damn you!" cried Drake, showering blow after blow, and finally flinging the man into the débris of what had fallen from the table with a crash.

The women were screaming by this time, and all the house was in alarm. But Drake went out with long strides and a ferocious face, and no one attempted to stop him.

XIII.

RETURNING to St. James's Street, Drake found John Storm waiting in his rooms. The men had changed a good deal since they last met, and the faces of both showed suffering.

"Forgive me for this visit," said Storm. "It was my first duty to call and thank you for what you've done."

"That's nothing—nothing at all," said Drake.

"I had also another object. You'll know what that is?"

Drake bowed his head.

"She is gone, it seems, and there is no trace left of her."

"None!"

"Then *you* know nothing?"

"Nothing! And you?"

"Nothing whatever!"

Drake bowed his head again. "I knew it was a lie that she had gone after you. I never believed that story?"

"Would to God she had!" said Storm fervently, and Drake flinched, but bore himself bravely. "When did she go?"

"Two days ago, apparently."

"Has anybody looked for her?"

"*I* have—everywhere—everywhere I can think of. But this London——"

"Yes, yes; I know, I know!"

"For two days I have never rested, and all last night——"

Storm's eyes were watching the twitchings of Drake's face. He had been sitting uneasily on his chair, and now he rose from it.

"Are you going already?" said Drake.

"Yes," said Storm. Then, in a husky voice, he added, "I don't know if we shall ever meet again, you and I. When death breaks the link that binds people——"

"For God's sake, don't say that."

"But it *is* so, isn't it?"

"Heaven knows! Certainly the letter she left behind—the letter to Rosa . . . Poor child! she was such a creature of joy—so bright, so brilliant! And then to think of her . . . I was much to blame—I came between you. But if I had once realised——"

Drake stopped, and the men fixed their eyes on each other for a moment, and then turned their heads away.

"I'm afraid I've done you a great injustice, sir," said Storm.

"Me?"

"I thought she was only your toy, your plaything. But perhaps" (his voice was breaking), "perhaps you loved her too."

Drake answered, almost inaudibly, "With all my heart and soul!"

"Then—then we have *both* lost her?"

"Both!"

There was silence for a moment. The hands of the two men met and clasped, and parted.

"I must go," said Storm, and he moved across the room with a look of utter weariness.

"But where are you going to?"

"I don't know—anywhere—nowhere—it doesn't matter now."

"Well——"

"Good-night!"

"Good-night!"

Drake stood at the door below until the slow, uncertain footsteps had turned the corner of the street and died away.

John Storm was sure now. Overwhelmed by his own disgrace, ashamed of his downfall, and perhaps with a sense of her own share in it, Glory had destroyed herself.

Strange contradiction! Much as he had hated Glory's way of life, there came to him at the moment a deep remorse at the thought that he had been the means of putting an end to it. And then her gay and happy spirit clouded by his own disasters! Her good name stained by association with his evil one! Her pure soul imperilled by his sin and fall!

But it was now very late, and he began to ask himself where he was to sleep. At first he thought of his old quarters under the church, and then he told himself that Brother Andrew would be gone by this time, and that everything connected with the parish must be transferred to other keeping. Going by a hotel in Trafalgar Square, he stepped in and asked for a bed.

"Certainly, sir," said the clerk, who was polite and deferential.

"Can I have something to eat too?"

"Coffee-room to the left, sir. Luggage coming, sir?"

"I have no luggage to-night," he answered; and then he saw that the clerk looked at him doubtfully.

The coffee-room was empty and only half lit up, for dinner was long over, and the business of the day was done. John was sitting at his meal, eating his food with his eyes down, and hardly conscious of what was going

on around, when he became aware that from time to time people opened the room door and looked across at him, then whispered together and passed out. At length the clerk came up to him with awkward manners and a look of constraint.

"I beg your pardon, sir, but are you Father Storm?"

John bent his head.

"Then I'm sorry to say we cannot accommodate you; we dare not—we must request you to leave."

John rose without a word, paid his bill, and left the place

But where was he to go to? What house would receive him? If one hotel refused him, all other hotels in London would do the same. Then he remembered the Shelter which he had himself established for the undeserving poor. The humiliation of that moment was terrible. But no matter! He would drink the cup of God's anger to the dregs.

The lamp was burning in the Clock Tower of the Houses of Parliament, and as John passed by the corner of Palace Yard two bishops came out in earnest conversation and walked on in front of him.

"The State and the Church are as the body and soul," said one, "and to separate them would be death to both."

"Just that," said the other; "and therefore we must fight for the Church's temporal possessions as we should contend for her spiritual rights, and so these Benefice Bills——"

The shelter was at the point of closing, and Jupe was putting out the lamp over the door as John stepped up to him.

"Who is it?" said Jupe in the dark.

"Don't you know me, Jupe?" said John.

"Father Jawn Storm!" cried the man in a whisper of fear.

"I want shelter for the night, Jupe. Can you put me up anywhere?"

"You, sir?"

The man was staggered, and the long rod in his hand shook like a reed. Then he began to stammer something about the Bishop and the Archdeacon and his new orders and instructions; how the Shelter had been taken over by other authorities, and he was now——

"But, d—— it all," he said, stopping suddenly, putting his foot down firmly, and wagging his head to right and left like a man making a brave resolution, "I'll tyke ye in, sir, and heng it!"

It was the bitterest pill of all, but John swallowed it and stepped into the house. As he did so he was partly aware of some tumult in a neighbouring street, with the screaming of men and women and the barking of dogs.

The blankets had been served out for the night, and the men in the Shelter were clambering up to their bunks. In addition to the main apartment, there was a little room with a glass front, which hung like a cage near to the ceiling at one end, and was entered by a circular iron stair. This was the keeper's own sleeping-place, and Jupe was making it ready for John, while John himself sat waiting with the look of a crushed and humiliated man, when the tumult in the street came nearer, and at last drew up in front of the house.

"Wot's thet?" the men asked each other, lifting their heads, and Jupe came down and went to the door. When he returned his face was white, the sweat hung on his forehead, and a trembling shook his whole body.

"For Gawd's sake, Father, leave the house at once,"

he whispered in great agitation. "There's a gang outside as'll pull the place dahn if I keep you."

There was silence for a moment, save for the shouting outside, and then John said with a sigh and a look of resignation, "Very well, let me out then," and he turned to the door.

"Not that wye, sir—this wye," said Jupe, and at the next moment they were stepping into a dark and narrow lane at the back. "Turn to the left when ye get ter the bottom, Father—mind ye turn ter the left."

But John Storm had scarcely heard him. His heart had failed him at last. He saw the baseness and ingratitude of the people whom he had spent himself to relieve and uplift and succour and comfort, and he repented himself of the hopes and aims and efforts which had come to this bankruptcy in the end.

"My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Yes, yes, that was it! It was not this poor vile race merely, stupid and ungrateful humanity—it was God! God used one man's ignorance, and another man's anger, and another man's hatred, and another man's spite, and worked out His own ends through it all. And God had rejected him, refused him, turned a deaf ear to his prayer and his repentance, robbed him of friends, of affection, of love, and cast him out of the family of man!

Very well! So be it! What should he do? He would go back to prison and say, "Take me in again—there is no room left for me in the world. I am alone, and my heart is dead within me!"

He was at the end of the dark lane by this time, and forgetting Jupe's warning, and seeing a brightly-lighted street running off to his right, he swung round to it and walked boldly along. This was Old Pye Street, and he

had come to the corner at which it opens into Brown's Square, when his absent mind became conscious of the loud baying of a dog. At the next moment the dog was at his feet, bounding about him with frantic delight, leaping up to him as if trying to kiss him, and uttering meanwhile the most tender, the most true, the most pitiful cries of love.

It was his own dog, the bloodhound Don!

His unworthy thoughts were chased away at the sight of this one faithful friend remaining, and he was stooping to fondle the great creature, to pull at the long drapery of its ears and the pendulous folds of its glorious forehead, when a short sharp cry caused him to lift his head.

"That's 'im!" said somebody, and then he was aware that a group of men with evil faces had gathered round. He knew them in a moment: the publican with his bandaged head, Sharkey, who had served his time and been released from prison, and Pincher and Hawkins, who were out on bail. They had all been drinking. The publican, who carried a stick, was drunk, and the "knocker-up" was staggering on a crutch.

Then came a hideous scene. The four men began to taunt John Storm; to take off their hats and bow to him in mock honour. "His Lordship, I believe!" said one. "His Reverend Lordship, if you please!" said another.

"Leave me, for God's sake leave me!" said John.

But their taunts became more and more menacing. "Wot abart the end uv the world, Father? "Didn't ye tell me to sell my bit uv bizness?" "And didn't ye say you'd cured me, and look at me now!"

"Don't, I tell you, don't!" cried John, and he moved away.

They followed and began to push him. Then he

stopped and cried in a loud voice of struggle and agony, "Do you want to raise the devil in me? Go home—go home!"

But they only laughed and renewed their torment. His hat fell off and he snatched at it to recover it. In doing so his hand struck somebody in the face. "Strike a cripple, will ye?" said the publican, and he raised his stick and struck a heavy blow on John's shoulder. At the next moment the dog had leapt upon the man and he was shrieking on the ground. The "knocker-up" lifted his crutch, and with the upper end of it he battered at the dog's brains.

"Stop, man, stop, stop! Don! Don!"

But the dog held on, and the man with the crutch continued to strike at it, until Pincher, who had run to the other side of the street, came back with a clasp knife and plunged it into the dog's neck. Then with a growl and a whine and a pitiful cry the creature let go its hold and rolled over, and the publican got on to his feet.

It was the beginning of the end. John Storm looked down at the dog in its death-throes, and all the devil in his heart came up and mastered him. There was a shop at the corner of the square, and some heavy chairs were standing on the pavement. He took up one of these and swung it round him like a toy, and the men fell on every side.

By this time the street was in commotion, and people were coming from every court and yard and alley, crying, "A madman!" "Police!" "Lay hold of him!" "He'll kill somebody!" "Down with him!"

John Storm was also shouting at the top of his voice, when suddenly he felt a dull, stunning pain, without exactly knowing where. Then he felt himself moving up,

up, up—he was in a train, the train was going through a tunnel and the guards were screaming—then it was hot, and the next moment it was cold, and still he was floating, floating—and then he saw Glory—he heard her say something—and then he opened his eyes and lo! the dark sky was above him, and some women were speaking in agitated voices over his face.

“Who is it?”

“It’s Father Storm. The brutes, the beasts! And the pore dog too!”

“Oh, dear! Where’s the p’lice? What are we goin’ ter do with ’im, Aggie?”

“Tyke ’im to my room, thet’s what.”

Then he heard Big Ben strike twelve, and then . . . It was a long, long journey, and the tunnel seemed to go on and on.

XIV.

HALF-AN-HOUR afterwards there came to the door of the Orphanage the single loud thud that is the knock of the poor. An upper window was opened, and a tremulous voice from the street below cried, "Glory! Miss Gloria!"

It was Agatha Jones. Glory hastened downstairs and found the girl in great agitation. One glance at her face in the candle-light seemed to tell all.

"You've found him?"

"Yes, he's hurt—he's——"

"Be calm, child; tell me everything," said Glory, and Aggie delivered her message.

Since leaving Holloway, Father Storm had been followed and found by means of the dog. The crowd had set on him and knocked him down and injured him. He was now lying in Aggie's room. There had been nowhere else to take him to, for the men had disappeared the moment he was down, and the women were afraid to take him in. The police had come at last, and they were now gone for the doctor. Mrs. Pincher was with the Father, and the poor dog was dead.

Glory held her hand over her heart while Aggie told her story. "I follow you," she said. "Did you tell him I was here? Did he send you to fetch me?"

"He didn't speak," said Aggie.

"Is he unconscious?"

"Yes."

"I'll go with you at once."

Hurrying across the streets by Glory's side, Aggie apologised for her room again. "I down't live thet wye now, you know," she said. "It may seem strange to you, but while my little boy was alive I couldn't go into the streets to save my life—I couldn't do it. And when 'is pore father died laht week——"

The stone stairs to the tenement house were thronged with women. They stood huddled together in groups like sheep in a storm. There was not a man anywhere visible, except a drunken sailor who was coming down from an upper storey whistling and singing. The women silenced him. Had he no feelings?

"The doctor's come, Sister," said a woman standing by Aggie's door. Then Glory entered the room.

The poor disordered place was lit by a cheap lamp, which threw splashes of light and left tracks of shadow. John lay on the bed, muttering words that were inaudible. His coat and waistcoat had been removed, and his shirt was open at the neck. The high wall of his forehead was marble white, but his cheeks were red and feverish. One of his arms lay over the side of the bed, and Glory took it up and held it. Her great eyes were moist, but she did not cry, neither did she speak or move. The doctor was bathing a wound at the back of the head, and he looked up and nodded as Glory entered. At the other side of the bed an elderly woman in a widow's cap was wiping her eyes with her apron.

When the doctor was going away Glory followed him to the door.

"Is he seriously injured, doctor?"

"Very." The doctor was a young man, quick, brusque, and emphatic.

"Not dange——"

"Yes. The brutes have done for him, nurse, though you needn't tell his friends so."

"Then—there is—no chance—whatever?"

"Not a ghost of a chance. By the way, you might try to find out where his friends are and send a line to them. I'll be here in the morning. Good-night!"

Glory staggered back to the room with her hand pressed hard over her heart, and the young doctor, going downstairs two steps at a stride, met a police-sergeant and a reporter coming up. "Cruel business, sir!" "Yes, but just one of those things that can't easily be brought home to anybody." "Sad, though!" "Very sad!"

The short night seemed as if it would never end. When daylight came, the cheerless place was cleared of its refuse—its withered roses, its cigarette-ends, and its heaps of left-off clothing. Towards eight o'clock Glory hurried back to the Orphanage, leaving Aggie and Mrs. Pincher in charge. John had been muttering the whole night through, but he had never once moved and he was still unconscious.

"Good-morning, Sister!"

"Good-morning, children!"

The little faces, fresh and bright from sleep, were waiting for their breakfast. When the meal was over Glory wrote by express to Mrs. Callender and to the

Father Superior of the Brotherhood, then put on her bonnet and cloak and turned towards Downing Street.

The Prime Minister had held an early Cabinet Council that morning. It was observed by his colleagues that he looked depressed and preoccupied. When the business of the day was done he rose to his feet rather feebly and said—

“My Lords and Gentlemen, I have long had it in mind to say something—something of importance—and I feel the impulse to say it now. We have been doing our best with legislation affecting the Church to give due reality and true life to its relation with the State. But the longer I live the more I feel that that relation is in itself a false one, injurious and even dangerous to both alike. Never in history, so far as I know, and certainly never within my own experience, has it been possible to maintain the union of Church and State without frequent adultery and corruption. The effort to do so has resulted in manifest impostures in sacred things, in ceremonies without spiritual significance, and in gross travesties of the solemn worship of God. Speaking of our own Church, I will not disguise my belief that, but for the good and true men who are always to be found within its pale, it could not survive the frequent disregard of principles which lie deep in the theory of Christianity. Its epicureanism, its regard for the interests of the purse, its tendency to rank the administrator above the apostle, are weeds that spring up out of the soil of its marriage with the State. And when I think of the anomalies and inequalities of its internal government, of its countless

poor clergy, and of its lords and princes; above all, when I remember its apostolic pretensions and the certainty that he who attempts to live within the Church the real life of the Apostles will incur the risk of that martyrdom which it has always pronounced against innovators, I cannot but believe that the consciences of many Churchmen would be glad to be relieved of a burden of State temptation which they feel to be hurtful and intolerable—to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's. Be that as it may, I have now to tell you that, feeling this question to be paramount, yet despairing of dealing with it in the few years that old age has left to me, I have concluded to resign my office. It is for some younger statesman to fight this battle of the separation between the spiritual and the temporal in the interests of true religion and true civilisation. God grant he may be a Christian man, and God speed and bless him."

The Cabinet broke up with many unwonted expressions of affection for the old leader and many requests that he should "think again" over the step he contemplated. But everyone knew that he had set his heart on an impossible enterprise, and everyone felt that behind it lay the painful impulse of an incident reported at length in the newspapers that morning.

Left alone in the Cabinet-room, the Prime Minister drew up his chair before the empty grate and gave way to tender memories. He thought of John Storm and the wreck his life had fallen to; of John's mother and her brave renunciation of love; and finally of himself and his near retirement. A spasm of the old lust of power came over him, and he saw himself—to-morrow, next day,

next week—delivering up his seals of office to the Queen, and then, the next day after that, getting up from this chair for the last time, and going out of this room to return to it no more—his work done, his life ended.

It was at that moment the footman came to say that a young lady in the dress of a nurse was waiting in the hall. "A messenger from John," he thought. And as he rose to receive her, heavily, wearily, and with the burden of his years upon him, Glory came into the room, with her quivering face and two great tear-drops standing in her eyes, but glowing with youth, and health, and courage.

"Sit down, sit down. But," looking at her again, "have you been here before?"

"Never, my lord."

"I have seen you somewhere."

"I was an actress once. And I am a friend of John's."

"Of John's? Then you are——"

"I am Glory."

"Glory! And so we meet at last, dear lady! But I *have* seen you before. When he spoke of you, but did not bring you to see me, I took a stolen glance at the theatre myself——"

"I have left it, my lord."

"Left it?"

And then she told him what she had done. His old eyes glistened and his head sank into his breast.

"It wasn't that I came to talk about, my lord, but another and more painful matter."

"Can I relieve you of the burden of your message,

my child? It has reached me already. It is in all the morning newspapers."

"I didn't think of that. Still, the doctor told me to——"

"What does the doctor say about him?"

"He says——"

"Yes?"

"He says we are going to lose him."

"I have sent for a great surgeon . . . But no doubt it is past help. Poor boy! It seems only yesterday that he came up to London so full of hope and expectation. I can see him now, with his great eyes, sitting in that chair you occupy, talking of his plans and purposes. Poor John! To think he should come to this! But these tumultuous souls whose hearts are battlefields, when the battle is over what can be left but a waste?"

Glory's eyes had dried of themselves, and she was looking at the old man with an expression of pain, but he went on without observing her.

"It is one of the dark riddles of the inscrutable power which rules over life, that the good man can go under like that, while the evil one lives and prospers."

He rose and walked to and fro before the fireplace. "Ah, well! The years bring me an ever-deepening sadness, an ever-increasing sense of our impotence to diminish the infinite sorrow of the world."

Then he looked down at Glory, and said, "But I can hardly forgive him that he has thrown away so much for so little. And when I think of you, my child, and of all that might have been, and then of the bad end he has come to——"

"But I don't call it coming to a bad end, sir," said Glory in a quivering voice.

"No? To be torn, and buffeted, and trampled down in the streets?"

"What of it? He might have died of old age in his bed, and yet come to a worse end than that."

"True; but still——"

"If that is coming to a bad end, I shall have to believe that my father, who was a missionary, came to a bad end too when he was killed by the fevers of Africa. Every martyr comes to a bad end, if that is a bad ending. And so does everybody who is brave and true, and does good to humanity, and is willing to die for it. But it isn't bad. It's glorious! I would rather be the daughter of a man who died like that than be the daughter of an earl; and if I could have been the wife of one who was torn and trampled down in the streets by the very people——"

But her face, which had been aflame, broke into tears again and her voice failed her. The old man could not speak, and there was silence for a moment. Then she recovered herself, and said quietly—

"I came to ask you if you could do something for me."

"What is it?"

"You may have heard that John wished me to marry him?"

"Would to God you had done so!"

"That was when everybody was praising him."

"Well?"

"Everybody is abusing him now and railing at him and insulting him."

"Well?"

"I want to marry him at last, if there is a way—if you think it is possible and can be managed."

"But you say he is a dying man?"

"That's why! When he comes to himself he will be thinking, as you think, that his life has been a failure, and I want somebody to be there and say, 'It isn't, it is only beginning; it is the grain of mustard-seed that *must* die, but it will live in the heart of humanity for ages and ages to come, and I would rather take up your name, injured and insulted as it is, than win all the glory the world has in it.'"

The tears were coursing down the old man's face, and for some minutes he did not attempt to speak. Then he said—

"What you propose is quite possible. It will be a canonical marriage, but it will take some little time to arrange. I must send across to Lambeth Palace. Towards evening I can go down to where he lies and take the license with me. Meantime speak to a clergyman and have everything in readiness."

He walked with Glory down the long corridor to the door, and there he kissed her on the forehead and said—

"I've long known that a woman can be brave, but meeting you this morning has taught me something else, my child. Time and again I thought John's love of you was near to madness. He was ready to give up everything for it—everything! And he was right! Love like yours is the pearl of pearls, and he who wins it is prince of princes!"

Later the same day, when the Prime Minister was sitting alone in his room, a member of his Cabinet brought him an evening paper containing an article which was making a deep impression in London. It was understood to be written by a journalist of Jewish extraction:—

“‘HIS BLOOD BE ON US AND ON OUR CHILDREN.’

“This prediction has been for eighteen hundred years the expression of an historical truth. That the whole Jewish nation, and not Pilate or the rabble of Jerusalem, killed Jesus is a fact which every Jew has been made to feel down to the present day. But let the Christian nation that is without sin towards the Founder of Christianity first cast a stone at the Jews. If it is true, as Jesus Himself said, that he who offers a cup of cold water to the least of His little ones offers it to Him, then it is also true that he who inflicts torture and death on His followers crucifies Him afresh. The unhappy man who has been miserably murdered in the slums of Westminster was a follower of Jesus if ever there lived one, and whosoever the actual persons may be who are guilty of his death, the true culprit is the Christian nation which has inflicted mockeries and insults on everybody who has dared to stand alone under the ensign of Christ.

“Let us not be led away by sneers. This man, whatever his errors, his weaknesses, his self-delusions, and his many human failings, was a Christian. He was the prophet of woman in relation to humanity as hardly anyone since Jesus has ever been. And he is hounded out of life. Thus, after nineteen centuries, Christianity presents the same characteristics of frightful tyranny which

disfigured the old Jewish law. 'We have a law, and by our law he ought to die.' Such is the sentence still pronounced on reformers in a country where civil and religious laws are confounded. God grant the other half of that doom may not also come true—'His blood be on us and our children.'"

XV.

THERE was a crowd of people of all sorts outside the tenement house when Glory returned to Brown's Square, and even the stairs were thronged with them. "The nurse!" they whispered as Glory appeared, and they made a way for her. Aggie was on the landing, wiping her eyes and answering the questions of strangers, being half afraid of the notoriety her poor room was achieving and half proud of it.

"The laidy 'as come, Miss Gloria, and she sent me to tell you to wyte 'ere for 'er a minute."

Then putting her head in at the open door she beckoned, and Mrs. Callender came out.

"Hush! He's coming to! The poor laddie! He's been calling for ye, and calling and calling. But he thinks ye're in heaven together seemingly, so ye must not say anything to shock him. Come your ways in now, and tak' care, lassie."

John was still wandering, and the light of another world was in his eyes, but he was smiling and he appeared to see.

"Where is she?" he said, in the toneless voice of one who talks in his sleep.

"She's here now. Look! She's close beside ye."

Glory advanced a step and stood beside the bed, struggling with herself not to fall upon his breast. He looked at her with a smile, but without any surprise, and said—

"I knew that you would come to meet me, Glory! How happy you look! We shall both be happy now."

Then his eyes wandered about the poor, ill-furnished apartment, and he said—

"How beautiful it is here! And how lightsome the air is! Look! The golden gates! And the seven golden candlesticks! And the sea of glass like unto crystal! And all the innumerable company of the angels!"

Aggie, who had returned to the room, was crying audibly.

"Are you crying, Glory? Foolish child to cry! But I know, I understand! Put your dear hand in mine, my child, and we will go together to God's throne, and say, 'Father, you must forgive us two. We were but man and woman, and we could not help but love each other though it was a fault, and for one of us it was a sin.' And God will forgive us, because He made us so, and because God is the God of love."

Glory could bear no more. "John!" she whispered.

He raised himself on his elbow, and held his head aslant, like one who listens to a sound that comes from a distance.

"John!"

"That's Glory's voice."

"It *is* Glory, dearest."

The serenity in his face gave way to a look of bewilderment.

"But Glory is dead."

"No, dear, she is alive, and she will never leave you again."

"What place is this?"

"This is Aggie's room."

"Aggie?"

"Don't you remember Aggie? One of the poor girls you fought and worked for."

"Is it your spirit, Glory?"

"It is myself, dearest—my very, very self."

Then a great joy came into his eyes; his breast heaved, his breath came quick, and without a word more he stretched out his arms.

"It *is* Glory! She is alive! My God! Oh, my God!"

"Do you forgive me, Glory?"

"Forgive? There is nothing to forgive you for, except loving me too well."

"My darling! My darling!"

"I thought I was in heaven, Glory; but I am like poor Buckingham—only half-way to it yet. Have I been unconscious?"

Glory nodded her head.

"Long?"

"Since last night."

"Ah, I remember everything now. I was knocked down in the streets, wasn't I? The men did it—Pincher, Hawkins, and the rest."

"They shall be punished, John," said Glory in a quivering voice. "As sure as heaven's above us and there's law in the land——"

"Aye, aye, laddie" (from somewhere by the door), "mak' yersel' sure o' that. There'll be never a man o' them but he'll hang for it, same as a pole-cat on a barn gate."

But John shook his head. "Poor fellows! They

didn't understand. When they come to see what they've done . . . 'Lord, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'"

She had wiped away the tears that had sprung to her eyes, and was sitting by his side and smiling. Her white teeth were showing, her red lips were twitching, and her face was full of sunshine. He was holding her hand, and gazing at her constantly, as if he could not allow himself to lose sight of her for a moment.

"But I'm half sorry, for all that, Glory," he said.

"Sorry?"

"That we are not both in the other world, for there you were my bride, I remember, and all our pains were over."

Then her sweet face coloured up to the forehead, and she leaned over the bed and whispered, "Ask me to be your bride in this one, dearest."

"I can't! I daren't!"

"Are you thinking of the vows?"

"No," emphatically. "But—I am a dying man; I know that quite well. And what right have I——"

She gave a little gay toss of her golden head. "Pooh! nobody was ever married because he had a *right* to be exactly."

"But there is your own profession—your great career."

She shook her head gravely. "That's all over now."

"Eh?" reaching up on his elbow.

"When you had gone, and nearly everybody was deserting your work, I thought I should like to take up a part of it."

"And did you?"

She nodded.

"Blessed be God! Oh, God is very good!" and he lay back and panted.

She laughed nervously. "Well, are you determined to make me ashamed? Am I to throw myself at your head, sir? Or perhaps you are going to refuse me after all."

"But why should I burden all the years of your life with the name of a fallen man? I am dying in disgrace, Glory."

"No, but in honour—great, great honour! These few bad days will be forgotten soon, dearest—quite, quite forgotten. And in the future time people will come to me and say—girls, dearest, brave, brave girls, who are fighting the battle of life like men—they will come and say, 'And did you know him? Did you really, really know him?' And I will smile triumphantly and answer them, 'Yes, for he loved me, and he is mine and I am his, for ever and for ever.'"

"It would be beautiful! We could not come together in this world, but to be united for all eternity on the threshold of the next——"

"There! say no more about it, for it's all arranged anyhow. The Father has been persuaded to read the service, and the Prime Minister is to bring the Archbishop's license, and it's to be to-day—this evening—and—and I'm not the first woman who has settled everything herself!"

Then she began to laugh and he laughed with her, and they laughed together in spite of his weakness and pain. At the next moment she was gone like a gleam of sunshine before a cloud, and Mrs. Callender had come back to the bedside, tying up the strings of her old-fashioned bonnet. "She's gold, laddie, that's what yon Glory is—just gold."

"Ay, tried in the fire and tested," he replied, and then the back of his head began to throb fiercely.

Glory had fled out of the room to cry, and Mrs. Callender joined her on the landing. "I maun awa', lassie. I'd like fine to stop wi' ye, but I can't. It minds me of the time my Alec left me, and that's forty lang years the day, but he seems to have been with me ever syne."

"Where's Glory?"

"She's coming, Father," said Aggie, and at the sound of her name Glory wiped her eyes and returned.

"And was it by my being lost that you came here to Westminster and found me?"

"Yes, and myself as well."

"And I thought my life had been wasted! When one thinks of God's designs one feels humble—humble as the grass at one's feet. But are you sure you will never regret?"

"Never!"

"Nor look back?"

She tossed her head again. "Call me Mrs. Lot at once and have done with it."

"It's wonderful! What a glorious work is before you, Glory! You'll take it up where I have left it, and carry it on and on. You are nobler than I am, and stronger, far stronger, and purer and braver. And haven't I said all along that what the world wants now is a great woman! I had the pith of it all, though; I saw the true light, but I was not worthy. I had sinned and fallen, and didn't know my own heart, and was not fit to enter into the promised land. It is something, nevertheless, that I see it a long way off. And if I have been taken

up to Sinai and heard the thunders of the everlasting law——”

“Hush, dear! somebody is coming.”

It was the great surgeon whom the Prime Minister had sent for. He examined the injuries carefully, and gave certain instructions. “Mind you do this, Sister,” and that and the other. But Glory could see that he had no hope. To relieve the pain in the head he wanted to administer morphia, but John refused to have it.

“I am going into the presence of the King,” he said. “Let me have all my wits about me.”

While the doctor was there the police-sergeant returned with a magistrate and the reporter. “Sorry to intrude, but hearing your patient was now conscious . . .” And then he prepared to take John’s deposition.

The reporter opened his notebook; the police magistrate stood at the foot of the bed, the doctor at one side of it, and Glory at the other side, holding John’s hand and quivering.

“Do you know who struck you, sir?”

There was silence for a moment, and then came “Yes.”

“Who was it?”

There was another pause, and then, “Don’t ask me.”

“But your own evidence will be most valuable, and indeed down to the present we have no other. Who was it, sir?”

“I can’t tell you.”

“But why?”

There was no answer.

“Why not give me the name of the scoundrel who took—I mean, attempted to take your life?”

Then in a voice that was hardly audible, with his head thrown back and his eyes on the ceiling, John said,

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

It was useless to go further. Glory saw the four men to the door.

“You must keep him quiet,” said the doctor; “not that anything can save him, but he is a man of stubborn will——”

And the police-magistrate said, “It may be all very fine to forgive your enemies, but everybody has his duty to society as well as to himself.”

“Yes, yes,” said Glory; “the world has no room for greater hearts than its own.”

The police-magistrate looked at her in bewilderment. “Just so,” he said, and disappeared.

“Where is she now, my girl?”

“She’s ’ere, Father.”

“Hush!” said Glory, coming back to the room. “The doctor says you are not to talk so much.”

“Then let me look at you, Glory. Sit here—here, and if I should seem to be suffering you must not mind that, because I am really very happy.”

Just then an organ-man in the street began to play. Glory thought the music might disturb John, and she was going to send Aggie to stop it. But his face brightened, and he said, “Sing for me, Glory. Let me hear your voice.”

The organ was playing a “coon” song, and she sang the words of it. They were simple words, childish words, almost babyish, but full of tenderness and love. The little black boy could think of nothing but his Loo-loo. In the night when he was sleeping he awoke and he was

weeping, for he was always, always dreaming of his Loo-loo, his Loo-loo!

When the song was finished they took hands and talked in whispers, though they were alone in the room now, and nobody could hear them. His white face was very bright, and her moist eyes were full of merriment. They grew foolish in their tenderness, and played with each other like little children. There were recollections of their early life in the little island home, memories of years concentrated into an hour—humorous stories and touches of mimicry. “O Lord! open Thou our lips . . . Where are you, Neilus? ‘Aw, here I am, your riverence, and my tongue shall show forth Thy praise.’”

All at once John’s face saddened and he said, “It’s a pity, though!”

“A pity?”

“I suppose the man who carries the flag always gets ‘potted,’ as they say. But somebody must carry it.”

Glory felt her tears gathering.

“It’s a pity that I have to go before you, Glory.”

She shook her head to keep the tears from flowing, and then answered gaily, “Oh, that’s only as it should be. I want a little while to think it all out, you know, and then—then I’ll pass over to you, just as we fall asleep at night and pass from day to day.”

And then he lay back with a sigh and said, “Well, I have had a happy end, at all events.”

XVI.

THE day had been fine, with a rather fierce sun shining until late in the afternoon, and long white clouds lying motionless in a deep blue sky, like celestial sandbanks in a celestial sea. But the tender and tempered splendour of the evening had come at length, with the sun gone over the housetops to the north-west, and its solemn afterglow like the wings of angels sweeping down. London was unusually quiet after the roar and turmoil of the day. The great city lay like a tired ocean, and like an ocean it seemed to sleep, full of its living as well as its dead.

In a little square which stands on the fringe of the slums of Westminster, and has a well-worn church in the middle, and tenement-houses, institutions, and workshops around its sides, a strange crowd had gathered. It consisted for the greater part of persons who are generally thought to be beyond the sympathies of life—the “priestesses of society,” who are the lowest among women. But they stood there for hours in silence, or walked about with dazed looks, glancing up at the window of a room on the second storey which glittered with the rays of the dying day. Their friend and champion was near to his death in that room, and they were waiting for the last news of him.

The Prime Minister had kept his promise. Walking across from Downing Street his face had been clouded,

as if he was thinking out the riddles of the inscrutable Power which stood to him for God. But when he came to the square and looked round at the people, his eyes brightened and he went on with resignation, and even content. The women made way for him with whispered explanations of who he was, and he walked through them to the room upstairs.

The room was nearly full already, for the Father Superior had come, bringing lay-brother Andrew along with him, and Aggie was sitting in a corner, and Mrs. Pincher was moving about, and there was also a stranger present. And though the little place was so mean and poor, it was full of soft radiance from the sky, and people walked about in it with a glow upon their faces.

Glory was by the bedside, standing erect and saying nothing. Her eyes were glistening with unshed tears and sometimes her mouth was twitching. John Storm was conscious and very quiet. Holding Glory's hand as if he could not part with it, he was looking around with the expression of the soldier who has done the fearful, perhaps the foolish and foolhardy thing, and scaled the walls of the enemy. He is lying with the enemy's shot in his breast now and with death in his eyes, but he is smiling proudly for all that, because he knows that the army is coming on. The Superior had brought from the Brotherhood the picture of the head of Christ in its crown of thorns to hang on the wall at the end of the bed, and the light from the window made flickering gleams on the glass and they were reflected on to his face.

Hardly anybody spoke. As soon as the Prime Minister arrived he took a paper from his pocket and gave it to the stranger, who glanced at it and bowed. Then they all gathered about the bed, and the Superior opened a

book which he had carried in his hands, and in solemn accents began to read—

“Dearly beloved, we are gathered together in the sight of God——”

Brother Andrew, who was kneeling at the foot of the bed, whined like a dog, and some women on the landing, who were peering in at the open door, whispered among themselves, “It’s the Holy Communion! Hush!”

John’s power did not fail him. He made his responses in a clear voice, although his last strength was thrilling along the thread of life. And Glory, when her turn came, was brave too. There was just a touch of the old hoarseness in her glorious voice, a slight quivering of the lids of her glistening eyes, and then she went on to the end without faltering:—

I, GLORY QUAYLE—

—*I, GLORY QUAYLE—*

—*take thee, JOHN STORM—*

—*take thee, JOHN STORM—*

—*to my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward—*

. . . . *to have and to hold from this day forward—*

—*for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health—*

. . . . *in sickness and in health—*

—*to love, cherish and obey, till death us do part—*

. . . . *till death us do part——”*

. . . . **AMEN!**

THE END.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

It will be seen that in writing this book I have sometimes used the diaries, letters, memoirs, sermons, and speeches of recognisable persons, living and dead. Also, it will be seen that I have frequently employed fact for the purposes of fiction. In doing so, I think I am true to the principles of art, and I know I am following the precedent of great writers. But being conscious of the grievous danger of giving personal offence, I would wish to say that I have not intended to paint anybody's portrait, or to describe the life of any known Society or to indicate the management of any particular Institution. To do any of these things would be to wrong the theory of fiction as I understand it, which is not to offer mock history or a substitute for fact, but to present a thought in the form of a story, with as much realism as the requirements of idealism will permit. In presenting the thought which is the motive of "The Christian," my desire has been to depict, however imperfectly, the types of mind and character, of creed and culture, of social effort and religious purpose which I think I see in the life of England and America at the close of the nineteenth century. For such a task my own observation and reflection could not be enough, and so I am conscious that in many passages of this book I have often been merely as the mould through which the metal has passed from the fires kept burning round about.

HALL CAINE.

*Greeba Castle,
Isle of Man, 1897.*

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